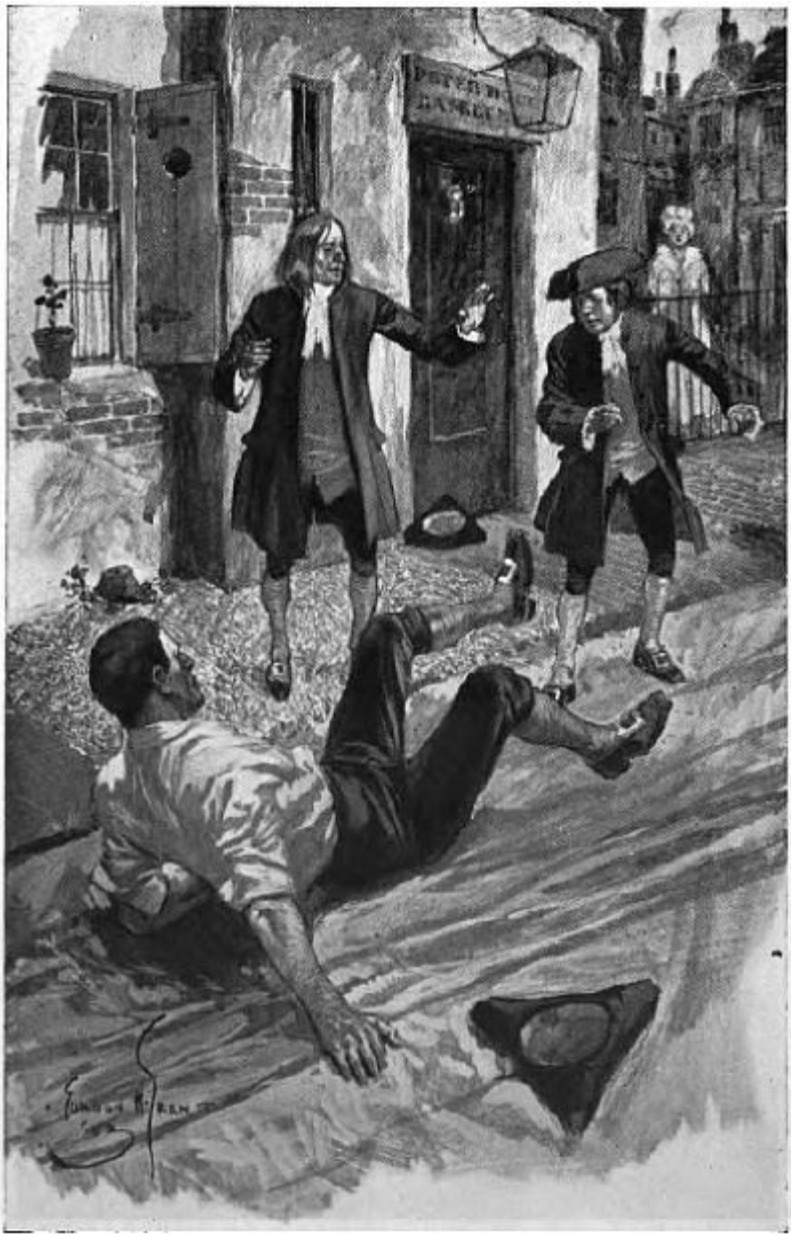

He landed a blow that lifted the bully fairly off his feet.

THE GIANT

OF THREE WARS

A LIFE OF GENERAL WINFIELD SCOTT

BY

JAMES BARNES

AUTHOR OF MIDSHIPMAN FARRAGUT, THE HERO OF ERIE,
COMMODORE BAINBRIDGE, WITH THE FLAG IN THE CHANNELL,
NAVAL ACTIONS OF 1812, ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY GORDON H. GRANT

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INTRODUCTION

In writing of the lives of some great men we find that their careers lead up easily and gradually to some crowning effort, some great episode. It is very seldom that we meet men in history, outside of those born to high positions, whose lives are filled with doings of national importance ; especially is it so of military leaders. Their reputation depends upon some great campaign; perhaps one boldly achieved victory has been the cause of all their fame.

With the hero of this narrative it was different. Events crowded themselves into his life. He had won his spurs and demonstrated his ability at a time when most men are but in the school of great affairs. Many times Scott had been compared to Napoleon in his wonderful grasp of situations and surroundings; but yet it remained for him to gather his largest honors in his later years.

It is impossible to build up any fictitious romance around a man with a life so filled with actual doings, and, in a book of this kind, space is all too short even to put them down in the order that they happened. It is very seldom that a soldier has fifty years of continual active service to his credit, yet this is true of Scott. But the people of to-day know little of him, though many who are still below middle age remember seeing him alive.

He came almost within reaching distance of being the President of the United States. When the civil war broke out he was at the head of the army, an old man. His mind was clear, but he had reached the time when men have to step aside, and he did so; grudgingly, perhaps, for that ambition to serve and to command remained with him to his death.

One of the things he said—and he said many things worth remembering — might well be preserved: "The world is made up of little things, and nothing is too small to be despised if it counts in the summing up of one's duties."

"Republics," some one has written, "are ungrateful; but posterity is just, and history is eventually impartial."

Perhaps this little book may lead people to read more deeply of a man who may have had his faults, as all men have, but who possessed those qualities that make men great— a sense of duty, a love of country, a brave heart and an indomitable will, and a gentle and loving sympathy for the suffering or the unfortunate.

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PREFACE TO DIGITAL EDITION

This is digital copy of the 1912 edition of James Barnes' 1903 book The Giant of Three War: The Life of Winfield Scott *has been hand-crafted from the finest electrons. Formatting of this book is designed to mimic the original text with some changes to increase readability for modern eyes. The nineteenth-century spacing around punctuation has been deleted to match modern punctuation and ship names have been italicized. Annotations have also been provided in italics where such notes seem appropriate. Finally, ten new, relevant images and maps have been added to the book where appropriate. Those images and diagrams are listed here.*

Maps and Additional Images

Location of the American crossing looking south (upstream).

Beach on which Scott landed at the base of the Queenstown Heights.

View of the Bridge over which Scott's troops attacked.

"Regulars, by God"

Medal Awarded to Winfield Scott, 1814

PLAN OF VERA CRUZ AND SAN JUAN DE ULLOA

PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF CERRO GORDO

General David E. Twiggs

Map of Battle of Churubusco

General Winfield Scott

THE GIANT OF THREE WARS

CHAPTER I

SCHOOL-DAYS IN OLD VIRGINIA

WiNFiELD Scott came of a sturdy ancestry. His father, William Scott, a Revolutionary soldier, had married in Petersburg, Va., in the year 1780, the beautiful Miss Ann Mason, the daughter of a neighbor. William was a Scotchman by descent, for his father, one of the clan Buccleuch, had escaped to America after the fateful battle of Culloden in 1746. Winfield did not remember his grandfather on his father's side, but he remembered well his mother's father, Daniel Mason, and his grandmother also, who was the only daughter of John Winfield, the wealthiest man in the colony of Virginia. At the time Winfield was born, at Laurel Branch, Va., June 13, 1786, an aunt and an uncle were still living, sister and brother of his mother; and, as the uncle was unmarried and the laws of Virginia in those days were like those of England, landed property descending in line to the male heirs, the boy was at that time destined, it appeared, to have much of the world's goods, and the pathway that stretched before him was an easy one. Perhaps the subsequent story of his life might have been changed altogether if the circumstances had not been altered. Very early he began to receive a good training for the battle of life.

Winfield's mother was a very religious woman, and she intended to bring up her only child to be a God-fearing man, and in this she well succeeded, for it was she who laid the foundations of his strong and upright character. But, despite the fact that in many ways he was old for his years, he was much the same as any other boy and had a boy's love for fun, adventure, and mischief. On one occasion, when he was only seven years old, the idea seized him while he was preparing for church, that a ramble in the sunlit fields would be much more to his liking than the close atmosphere of the meeting-house; and so, about the time that he was expected to be ready for divine worship, he hid himself in one of the empty guest-chambers. There he was found by one of the servants and escorted to the presence of his mother. Mrs. Scott believed in the old adage of the

danger of spoiling children, according to biblical maxim, and a switch was sent for. But little Winfield did not cringe or beg. Looking up into his mother's face, and then glancing at the instrument of punishment, a small branch cut from a Lombardy poplar, he gravely quoted a verse from St. Matthew, in the lesson of the day, "Every tree that bringeth forth not good fruit should be hewn down and cast into the fire." Mrs. Scott said nothing; she put aside the instrument of punishment, and taking Winfield by the hand, she reasoned with him piously as they walked on to church, which probably did him more good than the whipping would have done.

Winfield's uncle, Mr. Mason, from whom the boy would have inherited the vast estates of his great-grandfather, had late in life married a Miss Greenway. Soon a son was born to him, and the birth of several other children followed within the course of the next few years. Of course this made a great difference to young Win-field Scott, for instead of looking forward to the time when he would in the due course of events be a wealthy man, his mother impressed upon him the fact that he would have his own way to make and that his place in the world depended upon his own exertions.

For some time Winfield had studied only with his mother and his uncle's father-in-law, Dr. Greenway. Then for a few months he had as a tutor a young Irishman who happened to be passing some time in Virginia, and then he came under the care of a Quaker who lived at Petersburg, Mr. James Hargrave, who had a small boarding-school where a few sons of the neighboring gentlefolk lived together and pursued their studies—studies, however, for the most part dealing only with the classics and literature. Greek and Latin, a smattering of history, and a running acquaintance with English literature were all that were considered necessary for a gentleman's son to learn at school. Scott showed a decided taste for books and reading, and he had a quick and inquiring mind and natural aptitude. Before he had been a month at school he led his class and was the Quaker's favorite pupil.

One day, as Mr. Hargrave was returning from a visit to the Friends' meetinghouse, of which he was a prominent member, and as he was

approaching the school-building, he heard the sound of a great uproar. Entering, he came upon an interesting scene.

From a storeroom that opened off the study there came cries half of anger and half of laughter. Jammed up against the door was a huge packing-box full of books that had been moved across the schoolroom and placed there to imprison some of the scholars who were doing their best to remove the obstruction and free themselves. Seated on one of the benches near by was young Scott, now a boy of thirteen, but so grown and strong that he looked to be at least three years older. Two or three other young gentlemen were endeavoring to assist their imprisoned comrades to remove the packing-box, but their efforts were in vain. Mr. Hargrave was a Quaker, and therefore slow to anger, but he also was a strict disciplinarian, and this was the hour at which these young gentlemen should have been engaged in study. He quickly strode across the room, and calling upon the boys to desist from their uproar, he took hold of one of the handles of the box. But one tug was enough to show him he could not move it unaided.

"Who brought this box here?" he asked.

"I did," replied young Scott, swinging himself down to the floor.

"And who helped you?" asked the schoolmaster.

"No one," replied the boy.

"Now, friend Winfield," returned Mr. Hargrave, doubting indeed that the young boy could have performed the feat unaided, "if that is so, I will ask you to replace it."

Winfield took hold of the rope handle and straightened his strong young back. As he began to lift, his face grew red, and the schoolmaster, fearing he would strain himself, called upon him to stop. Winfield did so, obeying, however, with a gesture of remonstrance.

"I will get one of the men from the yard to help me," said Mr. Hargrave; "and I wish to assure you that your energy has been entirely misplaced."

"So has the box been, sir," retorted the boy; "and as it was my energy that is responsible, I think I should return it to its former position. May I try again, sir?"

As Mr. Hargrave did not reply, Winfield once more took hold of the handle, and by sheer strength of back and arm, he lifted the end of the heavy box, and backing away with it, dragged it across the schoolroom to its former position. Mr. Hargrave was astonished ; that a lad of young Scott's age should possess such strength was most astonishing, and the schoolmaster congratulated himself that he was one who believed in peaceful suasion rather than any system of education that employed corporal punishment as one of its methods of instilling knowledge and discipline.

During the next three or four years young Scott developed in more ways than one. Under the direction of the kindly Quaker, who, besides being a schoolmaster, was the county surveyor, he learned many things, but first and foremost, to control a tendency to quickness of temper that, added to his immense physical strength, might have got him into difficulties more than once. At the age of seventeen he stood six feet two, and although at this time not completely filled out, having outgrown much of his strength, he was still quick and agile. When he was sixteen he left Mr. Hargrave's school and went to study in Richmond with a Mr. James Ogilvie, a Scotchman of very brilliant attainments, who prepared young men for college, and had methods of his own that were generally successful.

Mr. James Ogilvie was the scion of a noble Scotch family, and while possessing, as we have said, great brilliancy, was also erratic at times to the verge of madness. He also had histrionic ability of no mean order, and would recite at great length speeches written by himself, formed on the model of Cicero's orations, dressing himself in what he conceived to be an imitation of the great Roman—toga and sandals and parchment roll. Perhaps the fact that he was an opium-eater had something to do with his eccentricity, for shortly after his favorite pupil, Scott, passed his examinations, in 1805, to William and Mary College, Mr. Ogilvie gave up teaching to take up the career of an itinerant lecturer, which he gave up again to return to Scotland as a claimant for a peerage.

Before Scott had entered college, however, there came to him the chance to return in a measure some of the kindness he had received from his former teacher, Mr. Hargrave. The opportunity presented itself in this manner: He was on a visit to Petersburg in his seventeenth year, just after he had left Mr. Hargrave's school, and was walking down the street of the village, when he heard a loud, angry voice and another in milder tones of remonstrance, coming from about the corner of one of the smaller streets. He reached the corner just in time to see a tall man aim a vicious blow that felled a smaller man to the ground. Instantly young Scott recognized in the aggressor a young farmer who had a great local reputation as both a brawler and bully, and whose strength was renowned for many miles in the country. The man whom he had struck was none other than James Hargrave!

Instantly Scott sprang forward. Before the big fellow had time to do more than turn to meet him, he had landed a blow under his eye that lifted the bully fairly off his feet and stretched him on the very spot where Mr. Hargrave had fallen a moment before. The big man struggled to his feet and made a half-drunken rush upon his young assailant. Scott prepared to meet the onslaught, and was gathering himself, when the Quaker rushed in between the two, and instead of helping his new champion, grasped him by the waist.

"Desist, desist, friend Winfield. I am a man of peace," he shouted. While he was being thus held it was with difficulty that Scott could ward off the rain of blows that the bully aimed at him. Some of them fell upon the peacemaker, and it would have gone hard with both of them had not the boy by a violent effort pushed the schoolmaster to one side, and at last, finding himself unencumbered, met his antagonist again with a straight, full arm blow upon the chin, that again stretched him on the ground. By this time the Quaker's lamentations and remonstrances and his cries for peace had attracted some of the neighbors, and a crowd quickly gathered. The bully, partly dazed, wished to continue the fight, and Scott, although it was his first encounter of the kind, was nothing loath. But the temper of the little mob had now been aroused; when they found that the young farmer had accused Mr. Hargrave, whose reputation for honesty was beyond reproach, of running a dishonest line, and that he had attacked the Quaker without provocation, they

would have taken the matter out of Scott's hands entirely, for the bully was both feared and hated. But again the Quaker was all for peace, and he implored his former pupil to aid him, and rather reluctantly Scott did so. By their combined efforts they saved the big man—now reduced to a trembling and fully frightened coward — from further punishment. Together they escorted him down the street and some distance out on the turnpike toward his home.

In writing of this incident afterward, Winfield Scott speaks of his surprise at the strength of his own arm. But in the next few years he had still further increased in height and breadth and weight, until he was without doubt the biggest and perhaps the strongest man in his part of the State of Virginia, standing six feet five inches, and weighing in the neighborhood of two hundred and thirty pounds.

A great sorrow came to him about this time, just before his eighteenth birthday, in the death of his mother. His tribute to her memory is one that touches every heart. He wrote of her: "My mother, that noble woman to whom I owe all."

When nineteen Scott left college and went into the law office of David Robinson, Esq., in Petersburg. Mr. Robinson had been brought over from Scotland by the young man's grandfather some years before, as a tutor, but by the time Scott had entered his office he had won for himself an honorable position at the bar of his adopted State.

For some time Scott remained a student in the law offices of Mr. Robinson. With him were two men who were destined to make their mark as lawyers and judges. Mr. Thomas Ruffin and John F. May. In those days lawyers and judges followed what they called the circuit, courts being held in different towns and counties; the members of the bar were forced to ride on horseback sometimes many miles to attend cases and to follow up the interest of their clients. On his return from his first circuit-riding. Scott, like many others, hastened to Richmond to witness the most important trial that had ever taken place up to that time in the history of the nation. It was no less than the trial for high treason of Aaron Burr, who in 1804 had killed, or, perhaps better, murdered, Alexander Hamilton in the famous duel in Weehawken. There is neither time nor space here to enter into a description of the trial nor to give a

reason for its taking place. Burr, one of the ablest men in America, but one of the most unscrupulous and ambitious, had been accused of treason in endeavoring to raise an armed force for the conquest of what is now Texas, then part of Mexico. It was the intention of the conspirators to place Burr at the head of the new Government, and the plot was nipped in the bud by the action of the Federal authorities. Burr, rendered very unpopular by the fact that he had killed a man who was in a measure the country's idol, had at first apparently little hope of escape, but so ably was he defended that he was acquitted—an acquittal that increased in a measure the bitter feelings that had been aroused against him and his followers. And upon this feeling and the fact that he had attended the trial hangs one of the most interesting episodes in our hero's history.

Gathered at Richmond at this time were all the able lawyers and prominent legal men of the day, and here it was that the gigantic young Virginian met for the first time many men whose influence and friendship were to help him in the future. The preliminaries to the trial dragged through several weary weeks, and at the verdict the country was considerably disturbed, but quickly it quieted down, and after his exciting sojourn in Richmond, young Scott returned to Petersburg and took up again the even manner of his life. But although the law had much attraction for him, he was not altogether satisfied, and soon an event was to happen that was to divert his mind into other channels and to turn his ability into other directions.

With this change of thought and ambition, his real career may be said to have begun. Very often mere accidents will prove to men who have before been doubting themselves that their doubts were quite correct, and opportunities, coming suddenly, have developed powers and faculties that they themselves had never been assured were in their full possession. So it was with Scott, and to tell of how he found himself and came to his own will make a chapter that will be the proper beginning of the story of his life.

CHAPTER II

THE VOLUNTEER

Early in the month of June, 1807, there occurred an incident that stirred the inhabitants of the United States to feelings of the deepest indignation. For a long time there had been loud complaints- and bitter denunciations of the English on account of their self-assumed "right of search" and the •*impressment " of so many American seamen into the royal service. The bitter feeling engendered by the War of the Revolution had not yet died away, and there were to be found many who prophesied that sooner or later the burning question of the freedom of the seas would be decided at the cannon's mouth. So, when the news came to the people's ears that the United States frigate *Chesapeake* had been stopped and fired into, while unwarned and unprepared, by the British frigate Leopard, and that three American citizens had been taken by force from her on the ground that they were British deserters, there was a great stir and the country was fired with indignation.

On July 2d President Jefferson issued an Act of Embargo directed against British vessels of war, interdicting them from any use of American harbors or inland waters, and in order to enforce the act and to prevent the British from obtaining supplies, fresh provisions, or water, volunteers were called for, and hastily constructed troops of cavalry and regiments of infantry gathered along the seacoast.

Young Winfield Scott was poring over some law papers in Mr. Robinson's office when the news was brought to him that volunteers were needed. In many long talks with his comrades. May and Ruffin, Scott had held that the only way to enforce respect for the rights of American seamen abroad was to fight for them, and now it seemed to him that the moment had come, and that the insult to the American flag should be avenged at once. It was very late in the evening and almost dark when the news came. Scott knew that twenty-five miles away a rendezvous of the Petersburg troop of cavalry, which some weeks before had tendered its services in case of need, had been appointed. He knew also that a trooper of this same body of horse, a master joiner and a man of very tall stature

and heavy build, lay ill at his home, and therefore was unable to attend the summons. He remembered also that the day before he had been informed that a Mr. Farrington, a farmer who lived not far from the outskirts of the town, had a remarkably strong and heavy riding horse for sale. Within an hour he had visited the trooper's house, borrowed the uniform that with some difficulty he managed to squeeze into, and had arranged with the farmer for the purchase of his horse, and in two hours he was riding through the darkness over the rough road to join the Petersburg cavalry as a volunteer.

The next morning he reported and was accepted for duty, and despite the fact that he had not slept during the night and had been in the saddle for some hours, having walked his horse the entire distance in order to arrive with him fresh, he started with the troop to the eastward. In the course of time they arrived at their camp that was in a grove of trees about two miles from Lynn Haven Bay.

At anchor about a mile from shore lay the British squadron under Sir Thomas Hardy, the brave commander in whose arms the great Nelson had expired. Every evening guards were posted by the Americans at the entrances to the little creeks and along the sandy shore, and a strict watch was kept in order to prevent the landing of any boat parties from the vessels that lay sullenly swinging at their anchors out in the tide-rip.

No orders had been given to fire upon any approaching boat, and as no war had been declared, the posting of the coast-guards was looked upon as merely an act of warning or precaution. Scott had been promoted to the position of lance-corporal—that is, a corporal for the nonce—and was in charge of a small picket near the mouth of one of the creeks.

He was lying asleep in his blanket one evening, when suddenly he was awakened by a touch on the shoulder. Looking up, he saw that it was one of his old school friends, the son of a wealthy planter, for nearly a third of the Petersburg troop of cavalry were gentlemen of wealth and position, who owned their own horses, and in many cases had brought their own body-servants with them to the front.

"Wake up, Scott," whispered the young man; "there's a boat rowing up the river; you can hear the oars plainly from the beach."

Hurriedly throwing off his blanket, Scott rushed to the water's edge. There plainly enough he could hear the rhythmic thrum of the oars, and, although it was so dark out on the black waters that he could distinguish nothing, it was evident that the boat was headed up-stream.

"We had better hail them and threaten to fire," suggested Scott's young friend breathlessly; "they will soon be beyond the point."

Scott checked him.

"No, no," he said; "the tide is running out, it will soon be daylight, and if they get beyond the point and above the mud-flats they will not be able to return. We may then be able to capture them without difficulty, and who knows but that great things may come of it. Let them go on."

Hurrying up the bank, Scott was just in time to prevent one of the sentries from hailing the boat out in the darkness. In fact, the man had been on the point of letting go his musket when Scott stopped him. Every one of the picket was now on the alert and gathered on the shore. The sound of rowing grew fainter and fainter as the boat went up the little river. It was low tide just about daybreak, and things happened exactly as the young corporal had predicted. Daylight showed the English boat's crew of six men endeavoring to force their cutter through the mud, encouraged by the orders and execrations of two young midshipmen in the stern-sheets. Some of the men were already overboard, pushing on the gunwales, while the others were using their oars as punting poles. But it was to no purpose; they could not move an inch. At a hail from shore they all scrambled back into the boat and sat there disconsolately, for they were unarmed. A dozen young troopers, removing their boots and breeches, waded out into the black mud, and, with the sailors' assistance, turned the boat's prow toward the shore, and soon had her high and dry among the sedges.

The two little midshipmen were escorted to where Scott stood on the higher bank. The elder approached and saluted gravely the gigantic figure that towered above him. But he checked himself before he had quite finished his salute, for he noticed that Scott wore the uniform of a common trooper.

"Where is there an officer?" inquired the midshipman. "My name is Fox, of his Britannic Majesty's frigate *Pallas*, and this is Mr. Wilburough of the *Leopard*. We demand to see an officer."

"My name is Scott," replied the young corporal genially, "and I belong to the Petersburg troop of volunteer cavalry." He extended his hand. "There is no officer present, and it happens that I am in command here," he added.

The midshipman at first drew himself up haughtily and pretended not to recognize Scott's extended hand. Then with some embarrassment he took it, for he felt that there was something rather different from the usual run of troopers in this tall young giant in a private's uniform.

"What are you going to do with us?" he asked. "You can not detain us. We are not prisoners of war."

"I trust, my dear sir," returned Scott, still smiling, "that you will allow me to be your host for a little while—until my superiors are communicated with. It will be much better than sitting out in the broiling sun in a boat, for the tide will not be in for some hours, and you could not possibly regain your ship. The main camp is but a mile from here, and we will be about in time for breakfast."

"I would like to see your superior officer at once," returned the midshipman, still with an assumption of dignity.

"It will be very easily arranged," returned Scott. "The major is a great friend of mine, and I am sure that he will be delighted to meet you."

The midshipmen did not understand this state of democracy that existed among the members of such a corps of volunteers. It generally takes some time for this state of affairs to wear away. Captains who have been entertained at the country houses of their troopers can not instantly forget the fact in the differences of military rank, and when the corporal had reported what had occurred to his superior officer, the latter's reply was somewhat peculiar. To tell the truth, the major was rather perturbed.

"Look here, Scott," he said, "I don't know what to do about this matter, and I wish you had not gone into it at all. I don't care to assume the responsibility, and certainly you were not acting under my orders."

"True enough," Scott replied; "it was all my own idea, and if there is any blame it should come on me. I will assume the responsibility, and I suggest that you allow me to keep these two young middies as my guests until we receive orders from headquarters at Washington. We will see that they are well taken care of, and that their crew is well fed and looked after."

"Do as you like," returned the major, whose military experience was, as can be imagined, of the slightest; "I wash my hands of the matter."

It was a very strange state of affairs, judging from their own standpoint, that the midshipmen found in the camp at Lynn Haven. Here they were entertained by ordinary troopers at a broad table that was placed under the trees in a beautiful sylvan grove. Delicacies of all kinds were abundant; here were the best of wines, and here were colored servants to wait upon and serve them, while the conversation was such as might pass at any gentleman's board. Scott had his two guests placed on either side of him, and before many minutes their restraint had worn away; in fact, it would have been strange if they had not felt at ease, for seated about them were young lawyers, doctors, and merchants, and men who afterward became prominent in many ways.

The sailors who composed the cutter's crew were being entertained in another part of the grove by some other troopers. Extra allowances of porter had been given them, and one of them had declared, "If this be war, blow my eyes, let me die thus fighting!"

Before the end of the first meal, Midshipman Fox had timidly looked up into Corporal Scott's face.

"You will pardon me, sir," he said, "if I ask a question that may seem impertinent: Do all American private soldiers live like gentlemen?"

Scott laughed.

"I suppose you would find, my dear sir, in this country, in case of war, many things that would not exist in England. We adapt ourselves easily to circumstances, and every man, I dare say, appreciates the best that he can get, when he can get it. Thus you find us now in comfortable circumstances; but I think, sir, in defense of our rights and liberties you would find these same gentlemen gathered about this board enduring the hardships of a private soldier's life without a grumble or complaint."

The young Englishman looked about him in wonderment, but said nothing. Here was a story to relate if ever he got back on board the *Pallas* that would make the gunroom wonder.

For a number of days the midshipmen and their crew remained in the American camp, and then orders came from Washington at last.

Although the middies had broken the embargo that had been made known to Sir Thomas Hardy, as commander of the squadron, the Federalists, or the peace party, were very strong in Washington, and beyond all doubt the United States was not prepared for war. So it was necessary to temporize, and as Scott wrote afterward in referring to this time and occasion: "Notwithstanding the long series of British wrongs, capped by the recent outrage (the *Leopard-Chesapeake* affair), Mr. Jefferson hesitated to take open and direct measure of retaliation. After deliberations and delay, orders came to restore the prisoners to Sir Thomas Hardy with the imbecile admonition usual in such cases. *Take care not to do so again.*"

Very soon matters were in a train of settlement, diplomatically speaking, in regard to the *Chesapeake* and *Leopard* trouble. The Federalists for the time had gained the day, and peace was well assured. The militia and the volunteers were disbanded, and with many hundreds of other embryo soldiers Scott returned to his former peaceful vocation. But, as he said himself, he had heard the bugle and the drum, and it was the music that awoke ambition. By accident there had come to him the directing force. He had seen the sign-post on the roadway of his life that pointed unerringly the direction that his thoughts and footsteps would follow. Many times during the next few months he thought of the pleasures and the excitement of the field, and, although he had never heard a shot fired in anger and had no idea what real war meant, he began to

think seriously of abandoning the pen for the sword. So he took up reading upon military subjects, and read indefatigably such books as he could easily lay hand to.

Intending, however, to follow for a time the practise of law in South Carolina, he traveled southward to Columbia on the way to Charleston, where he expected to take up his future residence. He hoped by stopping at Columbia to succeed in a petition that he had presented to the Legislature, allowing him to dispense with the usual requirement of a twelve months' previous residence before taking his final examinations—a requirement that was generally insisted upon in the case of any applicant being a nonresident of the State. In this petition, however, he failed, and thus he found himself, having cheerfully accepted the position, again a student in a law office, this time working under Judge Wilds, a South Carolinian and a man whose promising career was cut short by his early death at the age of forty-three.

It was Christmas eve of 1807 when Scott arrived at Charleston, and there he found that the prospect of hostilities with England had flared up again. New wrongs of American seamen had come to light. The British still persisted in their right of search, and even many Federalists had now joined forces with the party that strongly demanded war. It was believed in the South that the embargo on all American shipping that had just been laid was but the immediate forerunner of a war manifesto on the part of Congress.

Scott was strong in the opinion that his country and England would soon be at each other's throats, and immediately abandoning all his preparations to follow the law, he cast the die, and without seeking any advice upon the subject, set sail in a vessel bound for New York, intending to proceed at once to Washington in order to seek a commission in some marching regiment. A bill had been presented in Congress just at this time authorizing the trebling of the American regular forces, but after a few weeks of excitement "peace at any price" again gained the ascendency, and war was yet postponed. But Scott had by this time reached Washington, and finding his friend the Hon. William B. Giles was there, he without difficulty secured an audience with the President and the Secretary of War.

The day that Scott called upon Mr. Jefferson he found him seated with Dr. Mitchell, of New York, and Dr. Walter Jones, of Virginia. They were two members of Congress who were incessant talkers, and, as Scott records, his friend Mr. Giles was also distinguished for his colloquial powers. In a sitting of thirty minutes but two monologues were delivered, the other two personages being in a state of forced silence, although they were endeavoring here and there to get in a word. Mr. Jefferson, who was not a great talker, and who had not succeeded in successfully interrupting the others, at last turned to Scott.

"Well, young man," he said pleasantly, "what have you seen in Washington? Have you visited the Capitol? Whom have you heard speak?"

Without hesitation Scott replied: "I was, sir, in the House yesterday, and heard a part of Barent Gardeneir's six hours' speech on the embargo."

Now, Mr. Gardeneir, a member from the city of New York, was very bitterly opposed to the policy of the administration, and he had handled Mr. Jefferson with great severity in this same speech to which Scott had referred, and this the President knew well. But the young man's frankness did not prejudice him against him in the least. Dr. Mitchell, who was then talking, was a great friend of Gardeneir's, and to him Mr. Jefferson turned.

"Doctor," said the President, "I have just thought of an object to which to compare the House of Representatives, sir. It is like the chimney to our dwelling—it carries off the smoke of the party, which otherwise might stifle the nation."

The end of the interview was favorable to Scott's hopes, and he was promised by the President a captain's commission if the Augmentation Bill became a law. So in the spring of 1808, under the strength of this promise, Scott returned once more to Petersburg, and began the same circuit that he had made the year previous. In less than two months the welcome news came to him that he had received his appointment and that it had been confirmed, and at last the important envelope containing his commission was placed in his hands. Hastily tearing it open, he had

found that he was appointed a captain of light or flying artillery under the date of May 3, 1808. His orders were to recruit his company in the neighborhood, and when complete to proceed to Norfolk. In less than five months the roster of the company was filled and the men had received a month's instructions at the hands of able drill-masters. In the meantime Scott had increased in every way by constant application his own knowledge, and was well fitted to lead his men. The majority of them were younger farmers' sons and mechanics, and their age, like that of their youthful commander, was under twenty-five. But they were of good stock and a hardy fighting ancestry and loyal to the core. At last our hero felt that he was launched upon his real career, and that his life work was before him.

CHAPTER III

FROM PEACE TO WAR

February 4, 1809, Scott with his company embarked from Norfolk on an old slow-sailing hulk of a vessel bound for New Orleans. The passage was a most tedious and disagreeable one; the captain of the vessel proved inadequate to the difficulties of his position, and instead of laying his course through the narrow passages of the Bahama Islands, he proceeded by the only way he knew, which was around Cuba, skirting the southern shore. Thirty-five days they were at sea before they came to the mouth of the Mississippi, and here, through stupidity and bad seamanship, the captain ran the vessel ashore and she lost her rudder. It was not until April 1st that she dropped anchor off New Orleans.

In order to explain a rather unlooked-for and disagreeable passage in our young hero's history that took place within the next few months, it is necessary, perhaps, to glance quickly at the condition of affairs that existed in the army and in military circles at this time. Many of the older officers, through lack of active service, had fallen into bad habits. It was an age of great intemperance and hard drinking, and military men when not under an exacting discipline are apt to show evidence of any prevailing folly or custom. The new appointments to the army had mainly been for political reasons, and as party feeling ran very high at this time in the army and through the country at large, there were political appointments for party reasons alone, and generally they were very bad. Scott found the condition of affairs on the Mississippi not in the least to his liking.

Brigadier-General Wilkinson, late commander of the lower Mississippi, had at one time been a friend and close adherent of Burr, who, as we remember, was tried for high treason; but at that time Wilkinson had deserted his friend and turned what was practically state's evidence, or informer, against him. Scott in his impetuous way once expressed his opinion upon traitors in general and Wilkinson in particular. It was just at the time that the latter had been superseded in his position by General Wade Hampton,

who thus was Scott's commanding officer. But Wilkinson, through the influence of important friends, brought charges against the young artillery captain for conduct unbecoming an officer in speaking disrespectfully of his superior. With the aid of his henchmen he also trumped up a charge that was proved groundless, in which he accused young Scott of holding back money due his men as pay. The latter charge at the trial was dismissed, but Scott was found guilty of unofficerlike conduct for speaking frankly what many people knew and kept to themselves.

At the time that the charges were brought he was disgruntled with the service and was seriously thinking of abandoning it and returning to the law. But the fact that he would be soon brought to trial decided him to remain, notwithstanding the fact that on the first account, as we have said, he had been found guilty and sentenced to twelve months' suspension. Nine months of the sentence, however, were remitted by the court.

In 1810 he returned home to Virginia and took up his residence with a Mr. Leigh, a well-known lawyer of Petersburg, with whom he lived for some eight months, pursuing his studies upon military subjects and doing much reading in the fields of history and general literature.

That he did not intend to abandon the army, however, was proved conclusively by a letter that he wrote at this time to a friend of his, Mr. Lewis Edwards, of Washington. It was dated at Petersburg on June 11th, and ran as follows :

"Of myself—that personage that fills so large a space in every man's own imagination, and so small a one in the imagination of every other—I can say but little; perhaps less would please you more. Since my return to Virginia, my time has been passed in easy transitions from pleasure to study, from study to pleasure; in my gaiety forgetting the student, in the student forgetting my gaiety. I have generally been in the office of my friend Mr. Leigh, though not unmindful of the studies connected with my present profession; but you will easily conceive my military ardor has suffered abatement. Indeed, it is my design, as soon as circumstances will permit, to throw the feather out of my cap and resume it in my hand. Yet, should war come at last, my enthusiasm will be rekindled; and then,

who knows but that I may yet write my history with my sword?"

In the autumn of this same year (1811) it looked as if war with England could not be much longer postponed, and Scott with four other officers made the long journey to Baton Rouge by land, from whence he proceeded with his command into Georgia, stopping at a place on the Ocmulgee River that was then the Indian frontier, and close to the stamping-ground of the powerful tribe of Creeks. Here he served as judge-advocate on a court-martial and on active service attracted attention by his painstaking care and the ability with which he handled and controlled his men.

In the winter of 1811-12 he was from time to time on the staff of Brigadier-General Hampton at New Orleans, and while there he saw the arrival at the city on Christmas eve of the first steam-vessel that had ever plowed the waters of the Queen of Rivers. She arrived from Pittsburg and attracted a tremendous amount of attention.

Again it looked as if there would be no war, in spite of the threatening aspect of matters a few months previously, and Scott embarked on May 20, 1812, from New Orleans, for Washington, via Baltimore. It was a long and stormy passage, but at last they sighted the capes and were making into the entrance of the bay when they passed close to a British frigate lying off the bar. It was lucky that they were not two hours later, for before they got into the quiet waters they met a Hampton pilot-boat making out to sea under a cloud of canvas. This was June 20th, and the pilot-boat was bearing despatches to the British frigate, despatches of the utmost importance—in fact, no less than a communication from Mr. Mansfield, the British minister at Washington, in which he said that Congress had declared war two days before against Great Britain. The pilot claimed that he knew nothing of the contents of the despatch he was carrying.

Scott wrote about this moment as follows, when he referred to the fact that they had passed the frigate safely: "What a happy escape for me! Had the New Orleans packet been captured, I might, as prisoner, have chafed and been forgotten for months, perhaps years, in a British prison."

The vessel ran aground off North Point, about sixteen miles from

Baltimore, and Scott and several of the passengers, impatient for news, landed in a small boat, and started on the long walk to the city. Before they had proceeded very far they came to the camp of a militia regiment, where Scott, being a regular officer and in full uniform, was received with great acclaim. The declaration of war had just been received, brought in by a mounted man about the time that Scott and his party reached the camp, and the young captain was requested to read it to the assembled soldiers. Mounted on a table, he read the words which meant so much to the listeners. At the end there was furious cheering and much rejoicing that at last the country was to assert itself, for the hatred of the British imposition had now become so wide-spread that the feeble voice of the peace party was frowned down completely.

A farmer who had come in from the neighborhood in a double-seated gig offered to take Scott and two of his companions to Baltimore. The man, however, had been rejoicing in more ways than one, and was so much under the influence of liquor that he overturned the gig no less than three times. He refused, however, to let any one handle the reins until Scott had shaken him so that his teeth chattered, and deposited him on the floor of the gig under the back seat, whereupon the young officer himself took up the reins and drove on to the town. Here he found everything in great excitement; crowds of people were on the street corners discussing the news, and there was every evidence that the war was popular.

Meeting one of his old friends, he was informed of the good news that, owing most probably to General Hampton's influence, a double promotion awaited him, and that he had been commissioned a lieutenant-colonel at the age of twenty-six.

Major - General Hampton, who was Scott's friend and patron, was a man of quick temper, although generous, intrepid, and wise. Scott pays him many tributes, but confesses that he was of irritable nerves, and consequently often harsh and sometimes unjust. But in every case where his temper got the best of him General Hampton was eager in acknowledging his wrong and anxious to make amends. Scott met him in Washington, and together they visited Dr. Eustis, the Secretary of War. Between General Hampton and the doctor there had passed some rather unpleasant official

correspondence, and as they approached the office, General Hampton betrayed some evidences of nervousness. When the general's name was brought in to the Secretary, the latter came forward at once with both hands extended in a friendly fashion and in an eager welcome. But, to Scott's surprise, the general placed both hands behind him, and bowed coldly. Dr. Eustis for the moment was taken aback, but quickly recovering himself, he requested that his visitors be seated, and to all outside appearances the conversation was carried on in a friendly manner. When Scott and the general rose to go Secretary Eustis ignored the extended hand of General Hampton, and, imitating his former manner, bowed coldly, as the general had done on entering the office.

General Hampton was furious. His rage was so great that he was positively speechless. Nothing that Scott could do would take his mind from the affront that he thought he had received. No sooner did he arrive at the room at the inn at which he was stopping than he despatched a messenger for General D. R. Williams, a member of Congress from South Carolina, and immediately he wrote a challenge, requesting Dr. Eustis to appoint his friend, and to meet him in mortal combat. It was a strange side-light upon the customs of the day! Two men, long past middle age, occupying the highest position, talking of shooting one another down in cold blood at a time when the country was in the utmost need of their services, and all over what would now be merely a smiling matter! Luckily, both General Williams and the friend whom Dr. Eustis selected, Mr, Hamilton, the Secretary of the Navy, were sensible and cool-headed.

At a meeting at which Scott was present the whole affair was discussed thoroughly, and Scott, knowing so well the temper of his commanding officer, made a suggestion that was adopted. It was that the general should call again, and, in the presence of the only two witnesses, Scott himself and the chief clerk of the department, the general should come forward toward the Secretary with both hands extended, and that the Secretary should accept them in a friendly fashion. It was carried out to the letter, and the two men met, and, silently, with tears in their eyes, like two contrite schoolboys, clasped hands. We must smile as we think of the picture, and yet Scott, standing there and realizing how narrowly a

tragedy had been averted, could not help his eyes becoming moist also.

A very important command was now given to the young lieutenant-colonel. He was ordered to proceed to Philadelphia to gather together the companies of his regiment, and to prepare them for the field and the camp of instruction. But recruiting advanced very slowly, and, chafing at the delay in getting into active service, Scott petitioned that he be relieved and be sent to join one of the divisions that were gathering for active operations along the Canadian frontier. At last he received his orders to proceed to Niagara, where he reported to Brigadier-General Alexander Smyth, near Buffalo.

At this time Lieutenant Elliott, of the navy, was fitting up a small squadron a little below a place called Black Rock, in an inlet sheltered behind Squaw Island, and four days after Scott had arrived at his new post he was under fire for the first time in that brilliant action where the American boarded and cut out two small vessels of war, the *Caledonia* and the *Detroit*, the latter being one of the vessels captured by the British at the time of Hull's surrender.

Elliott was successful in his exploit, and boarded both vessels under the fire of the British guns early in the morning. The *Detroit*, however, drifted down the stream, and grounded on Squaw Island, where the Americans abandoned her, and she was again taken possession of by the enemy. But they were driven out .time and again by the forces on the mainland under Scott, and at last the vessel was set on fire, and was burned before the British could work her off the bar. For Scott's courage and bravery at this time too great praise could not be found, and Lieutenant Smyth complimented him upon the gallant manner in which he had led and commanded the small force at his disposal. [*Here, Barnes seems to confuse General Smyth with Lieutenant Elliott as there was no Lieutenant Smyth involved in the cutting-out effort. Scott makes no mention of any compliments in his memoirs and Smyth was not involved in the battle, so Barnes was probably referring to Lieutenant Elliott. General Smyth turned out to be an ineffective commander who was shortly removed from the army. He later gained some fame in authoring a pamphlet claiming that the Book of Revelation was forged and should*

not be accepted as canon, a argument which one Christian reviewer called "superficial" and which "made the least pretension to learning or criticism." The Christian Examiner and Theological Review, Vol. 2, *Boston: Cummings & Hilliard, 1825, p75.--Ed.]*

CHAPTER IV

THE BATTLE AT QUEENSTOWN

The motley little army which had been gathered on the south shore of the Niagara River was composed for the most part of raw and inexperienced militiamen, many of whom, as it subsequently proved, were serving against their will. Under Major-General Stephen Van Rensselaer, who had about 2,500 of these state troops under his orders, they were marshaled on the American side of the Niagara River, and here were joined on the 1st of October by 450 regulars under the command of Colonels Fenwick and Christy and Major Mullaney. For a long time nothing had been talked about but the invasion of Canada. The fort and village of Queenstown was directly across the river, and in plain sight of the American shore. [*Note that General Smyth, who had a brigade under his command and was technically under Rensselaer's authority, refused to participate in this effort because he believe himself to outrank Rensselaer. Smyth's brigade sat out the battle in Buffalo.--Ed.]*

It was the intention of Colonel Van Rensselaer to cross in small boats, and to attack the British who occupied the fort. Late in the evening of the 12th of October, Colonel Scott arrived by a forced march through the mud and rain at Schlosser, about one mile from the falls and about eight from Lewiston. He hastened at once to the latter place, and volunteered his services to General Van. Rensselaer, but the latter declined them, on the ground that every arrangement had been made. But he was permitted to bring his regiment up to the town and act as circumstances might require. Having only had but two hours' rest, the detachment started again through the heavy roads. All night they marched, and about four o'clock in the morning arrived at the town and placed their guns in position to fire across the river at the British fort, which was on the crown of the bluff. Meantime affairs had not gone well with the forces under General Van Rensselaer; although a brave and impetuous leader, he was a very jealous man, and wished to take upon himself the credit, if there was to be any credit, of the whole affair. The flat-boats that had been collected were few and inadequate to the demands made upon them. The current of the

river was strong, and as the boats crossed they were subjected to a heavy and incessant fire. General Van Rensselaer's son was badly wounded before he reached the English side; Colonel Fen-wick was also badly hit, and the detachment that he commanded were made prisoners as soon as they touched shore.

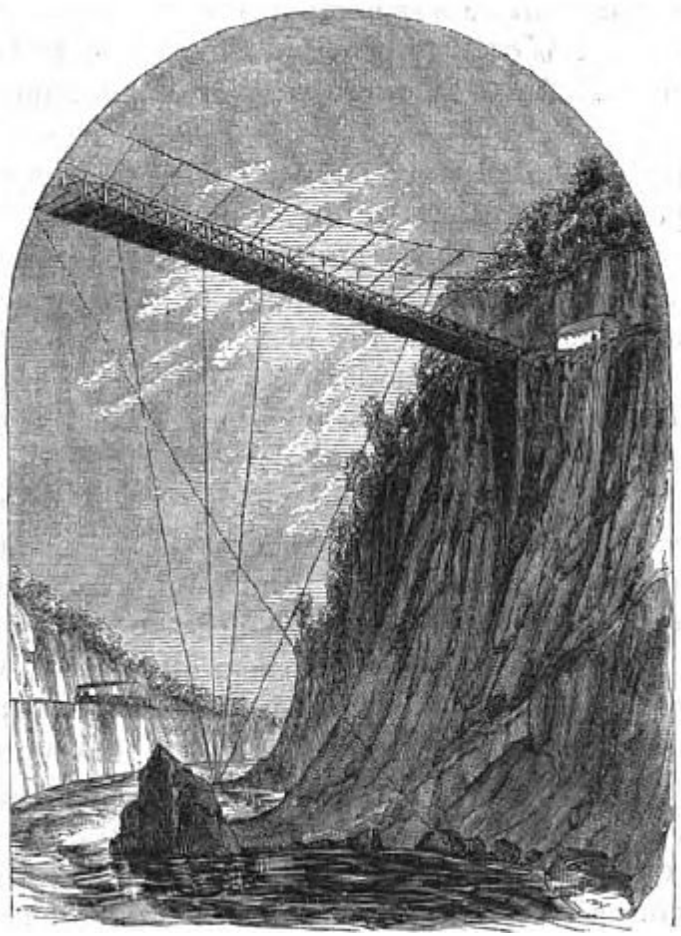
Location of the American crossing looking south (upstream). The heights on the right are where Scott defended against the British counterattack.
(engraving from *The Pictorial Field-book of the War of 1812*, Benson John Lossing, New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1869, 391.)

Christy also was slightly wounded, and the American militia, seeing how ill the regulars, who were the first to attempt to cross, had fared, lost heart entirely, especially when the news came that all of the commanding officers had been disabled. But the brave men who had already gained foothold on the British side, about 300 in number, being detachments of the Sixth and the Thirteenth Infantry, a company of the Twenty-third, and some light artillery with one 6-pounder, had already rushed the heights and taken the

main battery in the east end of the village.

Scott left his two juniors in charge of his own guns, for there were no boats large or strong enough to ferry them across the river, and calling for volunteers, a call which was responded to by some twenty men, he and his adjutant Roach succeeded in crossing the stream and landing on the stony beach under the protecting bank.

Rushing up over the path that the Americans had climbed but a few minutes before, Scott found a strange condition of affairs. The militia general, Wadsworth, had crossed without orders, and was then the senior officer in charge. The Americans had occupied the battery previously held by the British, who had spiked the guns before they had fallen back.



Beach on which Scott landed at the base of the Queenstown Heights.
(engraving from *The Pictorial Field-book of the War of 1812*, Benson John Lossing, New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1869, 395.)

Under the British General Brock, the lieutenant of Upper Canada and the vanquisher of Hull, the enemy had occupied a large stone house near the water's edge, but just beyond gunshot. It was known, however, that the large British garrison at Fort George, only eight miles away, would soon be on the march; and beside this the Indian allies of the British were gathering from every quarter, time was short, and immediate action was needed.

It is pleasant to have to report, in view of the succeeding circumstances, that two or three hundred of the New York militia had of their own volition seized some of the boats and crossed the river to the aid of the regulars. They had gathered in the fort or were dispersed in small bodies along the western bank. Scott found General Wadsworth in quite a dilemma as to his next move. He was a brave and able man, but entirely without military training or experience. It was with great relief that he saw the huge figure of Scott climbing the breastworks of the little fort. Rushing forward, Wadsworth hailed him gladly.

"Colonel Scott," he cried, "I tender the command to you. You know best professionally what ought to be done. I am here for the honor of my country and that of the New York militia."

It was the first time that the two officers had met, but he seemed to recognize the gifts that Scott possessed, that of instilling confidence and commanding men.

There was a lull now in the action, and the young commander took a survey of affairs. He found that there "were under him 350 regulars and 250 volunteers from the militia, whom he placed under the direction of Wadsworth and Colonel Stranahan. With Captain Totten, of the regular army, Scott placed his troops in such a position that he was not only able to receive the enemy, but to cover the ferry, for he expected every minute to be reenforced by the whole of the militia that were gathered across the river at Lewiston.

The interval of rest did not last long. From the stone house the British, led by Brock and his secretary, Colonel McDonald, in person, issued on a run in a gallant charge to attempt to regain the position, for they saw that the American reenforcements were not arriving, and that the boats had ceased crossing the river.

Brock's forces consisted of two companies of the Forty-ninth foot and some of the York infantry. They had been joined by 200 or 300 Indians, who had hastened in from the woods and had announced that the main body of troops under General Sheaffe were hurrying on from Fort George to their support.

The gallant sortie was met by such a withering fire from Scott's forces that they immediately fell back, and the brave General Brock and McDonald were killed. Scott was standing near one of the angles of the fort when he saw them both fall, for they had in their mad rush reached a point within 100 yards of the American line before they were beaten back. After the destructive volley, when the enemy were in retreat, he ordered "Cease firing," and sent forward some of his men to where the officers lay. Afterward, when some of the British soldiers came forward with an improvised stretcher, they were escorted safely part of the way back to the shelter of the woods.

And now another lull ensued; but it was soon broken, for the Indians, now increased in numbers to almost 600, creeping in among the trees and log fences, commenced a separate action, principally directed against the picket-line that Scott had thrown forward toward the town. But every attempt the warriors made to advance in force was beaten back.

Scott, on account of his tall and commanding figure, had again and again been picked out by the red-skinned riflemen. He seemed careless of any danger, and his escapes were simply marvelous. On one occasion when he had exposed himself no less than five rifle-bullets struck simultaneously within a few inches of his person. Totten and Wadsworth implored him to take shelter.

"Colonel," cried the latter, who several times had tried to interpose his own body in order to shelter the leader, "they will bag you yet!" But Scott's only idea now and his sole anxiety was to receive the reenforcements from the eastern shore. If only half or a third of them could be ferried across before the troops from Fort George could arrive, he knew he could hold the position and save the day.

"Where are the reenforcements?" he kept asking. For now moving bodies of troops could be seen coming from the westward and the Indian fire had recommenced. He had sent over two officers and some men in the only available boat to inquire from the American side the reason for the delay. Colonel Solomon Van Rensselaer, who lay badly wounded in four places, could not explain it; but soon a message came from the general, his father. One of those strange panics that sometimes seize undisciplined and inexperienced troops

had taken place among the militia forces at Lewiston. According to the law under which their military formation was organized and maintained, they were to serve only "in defense of their country," and were not compelled to take part in the invasion of an enemy's. Panic-stricken by the carnage they had witnessed taking place in the boats at the time that the regulars had crossed, and animated, no doubt, by the cowardly example of a few officers who held different political ideas from those of General Van Rensselaer, they refused to move. In despair. General Van Rensselaer wrote a note to Scott that read as follows: "I have passed through my camp. Not a regiment, not a company is willing to join you. Save yourselves by retreat if you can. Boats shall be sent to receive you."

And now the thin picket-line that had held its own, although at considerable loss, against the desultory attacks of the Indians besran to fall back. The survivors clambered over the hastily constructed works that protected the rear of the fort. Scott was in despair. His anger against the militia was overwhelming, but yet there was the danger of further disaster to the American army. The disgrace of General Hull's surrender, when he had given up, almost without a blow, his entire army, still rankled in every one's mind, and the position was indeed desperate. Retreat was impossible; there was but one boat that would hold at the best some 40 men for nearly 500. The forces under General Sheaffe were now in plain sight, advancing very slowly, and the suspense was very telling upon men's nerves. A few of the volunteers from the militia had already started for the shore of the river, and two or three had discarded their arms and were attempting to swim their way back to the American shore.

The young commander was endeavoring to unspike the British guns, and was showing some of the infantrymen how best to go about it, when word was brought to him that the British advance had actually begun. Some few of the troops had followed the example of the militiamen and started for the bank. Scott rallied them, and by word and example and by sometimes threatening them with his words and animating them by his imperious tones, he succeeded in getting them to turn about. Noticing that the main body of the British had not yet come within firing distance, he actually led about 200 of his followers out of the fort in a counter-

charge against the first line of the enemy, composed principally of rallied portions of the Forty-second and York, his old antagonists. He drove them back, and some of his men, following to the edges of the wood, were killed and scalped by lurking Indians. Once more all were gathered within the captured fort.

And now Sheaffe's forces were seen slowly marching just beyond musket-range and deploying for the attack, while the Indians in large numbers could be seen running through the woods north and south making for the river-bank in order to prevent retreat. But retreat was impossible—there were no boats. Twice had it been proposed to Scott to send out flags of truce, but yet he hoped that he might be able to hold his position, and that the sight of his doing so might thus encourage the recalcitrant soldiers on the American shore, from which every operation on the Canadian side was in full sight.

Owing to the losses already incurred, the defenders of the fort were now reduced to less than 300.

"What shall we do?" asked Captain Totten.

"We will think of surrender, sir, only when fighting is impossible," was Scott's reply.

The enclosed space that his little command occupied was not more than 300 feet in length by less than half in width. His entire force was gathered there with the exception of two small outposts a few hundred yards away on the river-bank, that were now firing upon the encroaching Indians. Scott mounted a log and, doffing his great cocked hat, addressed the brave little band about him:

"The enemy's balls," said he, "begin to thin our ranks. His numbers are overwhelming. In a moment the shock must come, and there is no retreat. We are in the beginning of a national war. Hull's surrender is to be redeemed. Let us then die arms in hand. Our country demands the sacrifice. The example will not be lost. The blood of the slain will make heroes of the living. Those who follow will avenge our fall and their country's wrongs. Who dare to stand? "

"ALL!" was the answering cry.

General Sheaffe, after much slow maneuvering, had now gained the position that he thought most advantageous for the attack. The reason for his slowness and caution was the fact that he overestimated the number of the defenders of the fort, for he deemed it impossible that a small body of men could make such a determined show of resistance. Now, however, he had divided his forces into three parts, the main body directed mainly at the rear of the fortification, and two strong detachments on the flanks. Everywhere about were the Indians, all armed with rifles, fighting as individuals, and anxious to participate in the massacre which seemed inevitable.

As they came forward they were met by a galling fire from the defenders; but now that catastrophe, the worst that can happen, in battle began to be felt by the Americans. Ammunition was running low, and in some companies hardly enough powder for a score of rounds remained. Again the men began to drift away toward the river. It was impossible to stop them and there was no use in remaining longer. It became a case of save yourself if you can. The outpost to the north had been surrounded by the Indians, and all but three of its members had been tomahawked or slain with the knife. The men scrambled down the bank to the pebbly beach, but there were no boats there to receive them. A complete annihilation of the hardy little band seemed inevitable. In order to save those who were yet living and to preserve the lives of the wounded, Scott had sent forward two men with flags of truce and notes addressed to the commanding officer of the British forces, indicating his willingness to surrender and claiming protection. But from neither flag was anything heard, the Indians having killed the bearers of the despatches before they had gone a hundred paces into the woods.

At last Scott himself determined to endeavor to reach the British general in person, for now the savage war-whoops and the cries of poor helpless victims resounded from all sides, and the fort was occupied by the main body of troops that had advanced from Fort George.

Calling Captain Totten to his side and beckoning Captain Gibson to accompany him, Scott, having tied his handkerchief to his sword-

blade, followed by the two officers, walked up the beach. They kept close to the water's edge, endeavoring to shield themselves under the steep side of the bluffs. Time and again they were fired upon by the Indians, only a few hundred feet away, but none of the party was hit. They seemed to bear charmed lives. At last the young colonel, who was leading, came to a road cut through the bank, leading up from the river to the village of Queenstown. If he could once gain the shelter of the houses he hoped he would find protection with the troops that he knew were sheltered there. So he increased his speed, Totten and Gibson following close behind him. Up the road they went, and had almost gained the slope when suddenly two Indians sprang from the bushes and confronted them. Scott pointed to the handkerchief on his sword and attempted to declare his purpose. But the warriors, who had already discharged their pieces, sprang forward, with their knives in one hand and their tomahawks in the other. Gibson and Totten drew their swords. The largest Indian, leaping forward, missed the blow with his hatchet and caught Scott's sword-arm in an attempt to wrench the weapon from him. Scott hurled him back. At this moment, with loud cries, three other Indians were seen rushing to their tribesmen's assistance through the underbrush. It looked black indeed for the three officers; but at this instant the red coat of a British captain, followed by a sergeant and half a dozen men, was seen at the top of the bank on the left. Without hesitation the officer, followed by most of his little command, leaped down the height of ten or twelve feet and, landing in the soft sand and earth, rushed to the Americans' side.

The Indians, discomfited and angered, drew off, and Scott and his two companions were conducted up the road and brought into the presence of General Sheaffe.

To him Scott surrendered the whole force with the honors of war. At once the redcoats were dispersed in all directions, driving back their savage allies and gathering together the scattered and dispirited Americans who were hiding for their lives. The prisoners were brought together in the fort that but a few minutes before they had been so bravely defending. The entire force that Scott surrendered was, as he supposed, about 300 men; to be exact, the actual fighting had been done by 139 regulars and 154 volunteers.

But, to his intense chagrin, scores upon scores of other militiamen were brought in subsequently. They had crossed the river, but had never joined the command upon the bluff, and were found concealed among the rocks and hiding-places along the banks to the northward. The total loss to the Americans in the battle of Queenstown was over 900 men. The fierceness of the fighting can easily be understood when it is seen that over 100 were killed outright.

Unknown to Scott, about 200 men under Major Mullaney had been taken early in the day, having drifted with the current directly under the enemy's guns, where they were powerless to protect themselves. There are many stories told by eye-witnesses of the young commanders marvelous escapes during the height of the battle. He was dressed in full uniform, wearing even his epaulets, and his tall stature and great breadth made him an enduring target. Many times he had been singled out by the Indian marksmen, but he remained unhurt. Once an officer approaching him urged him to throw a cloak around him or to change his costume.

"No," Scott replied, "I will die in my robes."

As he spoke, one of his brave officers, Captain Lawrence, was shot while standing close beside him. In referring to this battle of Queenstown, the historian Mansfield, who was a personal friend of the general, wrote as follows:

"While the mistakes, the errors, and the losses of the day were deplored, the American press and people recognized, amid regrets and misfortunes, a spirit of achievement, a boldness in danger, and a gallant bearing which inspired new hopes and pointed out the way to ultimate success. The daring gallantry of Colonel Van Rensselaer; the capture of the British battery by Wood and his heroic companions; the intrepid conduct of Wadsworth, of Chrystie, of Totten, and many others; and particularly the courage, skill, and continued activity and exertions of Scott, had given a cheerfulness even to the darkness of defeat, and almost a glow of satisfaction to the memory of Queenstown Heights."

But Scott felt that the responsibility to a certain extent lay upon his shoulders, and, although they were broad, the weight afflicted him;

but every one who has read history knows that circumstances often arise that turn what should be brilliant successes into dismal failures.

Had the militia behaved properly there would have been a different story to tell. It is a pleasure, however, to record that many of these same men afterward redeemed themselves in the subsequent actions along the frontier, and that Scott was in no way held responsible by his Government or by the people of his country for the disasters of the day. He had volunteered, and had done his best, and no man could do more.

CHAPTER V

A PRISONER OF WAR

The unfortunate American officers and men were well treated by their captors. The officers of both armies messed together, and the Americans were only put under such restraint as that imposed by their parole of honor. For the most part the British showed great delicacy and commiseration for the feelings of their unwilling guests. All brave men feel kindly disposed toward other brave men wˆho have fought a manly fight and lost. The bitterness of conflict, as a general rule, does not extend among civilized people beyond the last shot fired on the battlefield. But there are exceptions, and very often men forget themselves. On one occasion, at dinner, an officer of the Forty-second, who was a newcomer to the mess, addressed Scott as follows :

"I suppose you have viewed the falls, sir?"

"I have," Scott replied. "Their grandeur and magnificence are beyond description."

"You should see them," replied the officer, "after a brilliant victory; their beauty is much increased."

"You have not yet seen them from the American side," Scott replied, "and you might not speak thus if my sword had not been taken from me. If you intend to insult me you might first return it."

The officer, abashed, replied nothing, and the members of the mess rose at once and toasted both Scott and his reply. The officer, whose confusion was further increased by a reproof from General Sheaffe, got up and left the table. There is a sequel to this little incident that will be told later.

Immediately after the surrender all the prisoners were taken to the village at the mouth of the river, now called Niagara, and Scott and his companions were lodged at an inn. They had the liberty of the house, and there was but one sentry placed at the door, more as a matter of form than as a matter of restraint.

Scott was seated in the dining-room writing a letter when a message was brought to him that some one wished to speak with the "tall American." Immediately Scott put down his pen and alone passed through several doors into the wide"entry. Here he was both amused and surprised to find that his visitors were two Indians, lithe, stalwart savages, dressed in richly embroidered garments of buckskin, with their arms in their wampum belts and their faces decorated brilliantly with war-paint. Instantly he recognized them as the two who had sprung out upon him when he bore the flag of truce. The elder, who was the taller and stronger, and under whose brown skin the muscles and sinews showed plainly, was Captain Jacobs, a celebrated chieftain, and the most powerful of all the men of his tribe. The other was a stripling of perhaps nineteen years of age and but little inferior to his companion in strength and muscular development.

As Scott came forward to meet them they stood still and gazed upon him in astonishment. Jacobs spoke first.

"You live man?" he asked incredulously.

Scott smiled. "As live as ever," he replied.

"I shoot you six times," replied the chief, holding up all the fingers of one hand and the thumb of the other. " He shoot you four times," he said, indicating his companion, who now held up four fingers and nodded half scowlingly. "You dead man!" he said.

Scott drew himself to his full height, and half laughed.

"I am very much alive, thank you," he replied again. " Is there anything else you wish?"

"I tell you I shoot good," cried the larger Indian, stepping forward. At the same time, before Scott was aware of his intention, the savage had caught him by the elbow in his vise-like grip and half swung him around in order to inspect his back for shot-holes. The young officer whirled, and taking hold of Jacobs's wrist, threw him from him with such force that he almost fell in a corner of the hallway.

"Off, villain! you fired like a squaw," Scott cried in anger, and was about to turn to reenter the room, when the younger Indian interposed.

"We kill you now, big man," he cried, and at the same time he loosened his large hunting-knife from his girdle, while Jacobs, regaining his feet, drew his gleaming tomahawk. It might have been possible for Scott to have leaped the balustrade and gained the staircase, but such a thought never entered his mind. It would have been useless to have cried for help, for none could have arrived in time, but in a quick glance to one side he perceived that in a corner stood the swords that the British had taken from him and from his brother officers, and that according to customs of war they had laid aside. In an instant he had picked one out, a long saber with a heavy steel scabbard, and jumping back, unsheathed it. There he stood with his blade balanced, ready for the attack, his eye shifting from one of his foes to the other, as they advanced slowly upon him. It was a moment when coolness was needed. He determined to kill Jacobs with a single thrust, if possible, and then to spring upon the other Indian, trusting to his great strength to disarm him or disable him before the knife or tomahawk could be used. There was some advantage in the position that he occupied. It was just at the foot of the staircase and the savages had to approach him from in front. Crouching for the spring, with their eyes fixed upon his face, the two athletic figures neared. The blow was about to fall and Scott was poising himself lightly and freely for the effort, when the door opened and a British officer entered suddenly from the street. At once he saw what was going on.

"Ho! the guard here !" he cried, then leaping bravely forward, he caught Jacobs by the shoulder, and drawing his pistol, leveled it at the head of his young companion. Both turned now upon the officer, but Scott's blade was at the elder Indian's throat, and at once the guard that happened by the best of good fortune to be outside the door rushed in and marched the Indians, grumbling and muttering, out of the hallway.

"Thanks for your timely coming, sir," said Scott to the officer. "You probably saved my life."

"And you mine also," replied the Englishman, "for had there only

been one of us, he would have died; my pistol was unloaded! That young rascal should be hanged. It was his idea, I believe, to kill you, for he had sworn early in the fight, after he had missed you several times, to take your life even if he lost his own. His name is Brant, and he is a son of the old [*Joseph*] Brant of the Revolutionary War, whose name you may remember."

Well, indeed, Scott remembered this dreaded name of perhaps the greatest of the northern chiefs, and he knew also that an Indian's vow was seldom made in vain.

The tribes had lost many of their number at the hands of the Americans on Queenstown Heights, and their hatred of the big American was so great that while he remained at Niagara, if he went outside the inn, he could not do so without a British escort, and on the occasion of his going to dine with Sir Roger Sheaffe, he walked through the lines of redskins, guarded by a full company of infantry.

There is one little incident that goes to show the magnanimity of our young hero's character. The gallant British General Brock was buried beneath one of the bastions of Fort George with the highest military honors. Directly opposite, on the American shore, was Fort Niagara, then held by the New York State troops and a small body of regulars under Captain McKeon. Just before the funeral took place, Colonel Scott sent over a messenger with his compliments, requesting that minute-guns be fired during the burial of the gallant Brock, whose manly qualities had been held in high esteem even by his enemies. So while his mortal remains were being put to rest, from both sides of the river the peaceful guns were booming and friend and foe alike shared in thus paying tribute to his memory.

Soon it was rumored that the prisoners would be sent to Quebec, and that arrangements were being made to forward them on a cartel as prisoners of war for exchange to Boston.

Scott was in the cabin of the transport when he heard a loud voice demanding admission from the sentry at the cabin door and insisting upon the right to see him. This the sentry vigorously denied. Scott hastened to the sentry's side, and there found one of his own men, much excited. With some difficulty he quieted him

and found out what was the matter.

"They're sorting out every man who's got a bit of a brogue, sir," cried the soldier, who showed a trace of his ancestry in his speech, "and they are going to send them over the seas to be tried for high treason. There's young Tom McCullough, who, the same as myself, was born in Norfolk, and McCurdy, who was born in New York; and they declare that all will be hanged for fighting against the king."

Now it happened that there were a number of Irishmen who were actually born in Ireland, but had emigrated to America and had enlisted in the American ranks. There were even among the non-commissioned officers a few hardy old veterans of the Revolution who could claim the Emerald Isle as the place of their birth.

Scott saw that his presence on deck was at once necessary. He was placed under no restraint on board the vessel, and so, brushing by the sentry, in two leaps he was up the ladder and stood on the quarter-deck. There he saw the prisoners, numbering over 200, standing under a guard of marines in the waist. An officer was calling their names from a list in his hand. Twenty-three men had already been separated from the others, and stood to one side with forlorn and disconsolate looks. They had already been told off as prisoners, to be detained and sent to England for trial. Scott stood out on the deck before them. The officer looked up from the paper he was reading.

"Well, sir? " he asked. "What can I do for you?"

"You can explain," Scott replied, " the reason for this discrimination. I was led to understand that all of the men placed aboard this vessel were to be sent to the United States for exchange."

"There are some traitors here," the officer replied; "subjects of his Majesty, who have been taken in arms against him. And we are led to believe that there are also not a few deserters from our service. We have a right to investigate."

"I deny that right, sir," Scott replied. "A man who enlists in the army of the United States and fights as provided under the Constitution becomes a citizen, and is entitled to all privileges and protection,

and I warn you, sir, that the interests of every man shall be looked after." [*This was not legally true, although one can respect the sentiment.--Ed.*]

"You forget your position, sir," replied the officer hotly; "you're a prisoner, and I order you below to the cabin."

"I am on my parole," Scott thundered, "and you can send me to my cabin by the use of force only, for I decline to go. It is my privilege to look after the personal safety of my men."

The officer waved his hand toward the twenty-three disconsolate ones who stood lined up against the bulwarks.

"This is my answer," he replied. "These Irish renegades are traitors, and will be tried as such. Any more of their ilk will suffer the same fate. Thomas McNulty." he read in a loud voice from the list he had in his hand,

Seott now turned to the Americans.

"If there is a man named McNulty among you." he said. "I order him not to step forward, and as your commanding officer. I order not one of you to reply to a question addressed to you by any British officer aboard this ship in any manner whatsoever. They can not force you to speak. Therefore, keep silent!"

The men looked at their tall leader with hope mingled with admiration. Had he said the word, unarmed as they were, they would have thrown themselves upon the marine guard that at a whispered order from a young red-coated lieutenant had brought their pieces to the ready.

"I know my rights. I tell you." Scott added. "and though a prisoner, they still exist. Let these men be returned as they were before."

"No." replied the officer: "these we are sure of—twenty-three traitors who will suffer traitors' fates."

Turning to the officer of the guard, he ordered that the unfortunate men collected should be taken off in the long-boat waiting alongside and put on shore to be transferred to another ship.

Scott's anger now was beyond all bounds. Stretching himself to his full height, he pointed to the poor fellows that were being hustled toward the gangway.

"Observe you this," he said; "for every one of those men an Englishman will be set apart to abide the sentence placed upon them. My country does not forget those who serve her in time of need."

Then walking over to where the prisoners were, he swept through the marines, and grasped some of his men by their extended hands.

"Good-by, my lads," he said; "don't fear! Keep up your courage; no harm shall come to you."

With that he turned and, acknowledging the salute of his own men, who stood at attention with their fingers to their cap brims, he went below. In a few minutes the ship was under way.

It is a peculiar characteristic of the good officer and natural soldier that his men are always his first thought. Over and above all else should be their interest and welfare, and let private soldiers once understand that this is the case, and duty is exalted to almost a religion; affection and a desire to serve take the place of instilled obedience. Self-sacrifice becomes a pleasure. A handful of men animated by this spirit will fight harder than thrice their number without it.

Scott always had this peculiar gift; he could call upon men for almost superhuman endeavor, and under his leadership they never failed to respond.

As soon as he reached Boston, Scott went on to Washington, and in a short time was exchanged. He drew up a report of the occurrence on board the cartel and informed the Secretary of War of the matter, and this very same day a report was presented to Congress, and immediately a passage of an act of retaliation followed. This was on March 3, 1813. Scott never allowed himself to forget and never lost sight of the unfortunate Irishmen. In the latter part of May, at the capture of Fort George, where many prisoners were taken, he picked out twenty-three as hostages to receive the same

punishment that should be meted out to his own brave soldiers. Much unnecessary suffering followed perhaps, for the English retaliated; but Scott's prompt redemption of his promise saved his Irish troops. A strange sequel to this occurrence took place. Two years afterward—when he was on leave of absence and recovering from his wounds— he was passing one of the piers on the East River, New York city, when suddenly he heard the sound of loud cheering. Stopping for an instant, he found himself surrounded by a lot of excited men, some of whom rushed forward, endeavoring to take his hand, or even to touch him. They were the same twenty-three who had just that moment been landed after their long imprisonment. They almost crushed their still weak and wounded general in their arms, so great was their enthusiasm and gratitude. It might be mentioned that he wrote to the department at Washington on their behalf, claiming full pay for their services during the time of their imprisonment and soliciting patents for land bounty. Both petitions, it is pleasing to record, were granted.

CHAPTER VI

FROM FORT GEORGE TO CHIPPEWA

The capture of York opened the campaign of 1813. Indeed, success was needed to encourage the American arms on land, for up to this time, if it had not been for the brilliant successes of the little navy that had humbled the vaunted pride of Great Britain on the seas, the country would have been in a most despondent mood. General Dearborn, who now commanded the little army on the Canadian frontier at Fort Niagara, determined to take advantage of the moment when the hopes of the troops under him had revived, and again to attempt the invasion of Canadian soil. Fort George and Fort Erie were within striking distance, and he had long conceived the plan for capturing them by operations in connection with the fleet that Commodore Chauncey had formed upon the lake. The Americans at this time had complete control of the waters, and men and artillery could easily be transported and landed under the guns of the vessels, which, being of light draft, could readily cooperate in any attack.

Soon after his exchange Scott had joined General Dearborn as adjutant-general. He was then but twenty-seven years of age, but as his promotion had advanced him, he still claimed the privilege of waiving brevet rank and returning to active command of his own regiment. His advice and counsel were at General Dearborn's disposal, but he insisted that in action his position was at the head of his men. On the 26th of May everything was in readiness, and early in the morning General Dearborn and four or five thousand men embarked on the vessels and boats of Chauncey's squadron. Before daylight on the following morning the fleet got under way and stood for the opposite shore. Colonel Scott had volunteered to lead the advance-guard of 500 men, all regulars, many of them veterans of the fight at Queenstown, and making up the flower of the army. There was not one among them who would not cheerfully have laid down his life to serve the young commander they all knew so well.

The plans for the movement were well laid this time. It was

intended that Colonel Moses Porter should follow with the siege-train, and that Generals Boyd, Sheridan, and Chandler, with their brigades, should land as soon as Scott's picked guard should effect a position on the bank. The reserve was placed under the command of Colonel Macomb. Captain Perry had volunteered to accompany Scott and to look after the embarkation of the troops.

With a slight, but fair, wind the vessels wafted on. Just at daybreak they were within long gunshot of the shore. Before nine o'clock, owing to the continued fire upon the British forts, their guns were almost silenced, and Scott with his fleet of boats rowed swiftly in. From the banks volley after volley met them. The spray dashed round them, and many men were hit, but the sailors lay back on their oars, the infantry assisting them. Then, holding their powder high above their heads, they plunged breast high into the water, and inside of four minutes after the first boat had grated its prow on the sand all were assembled beneath the bank. They knew well that the eyes of the army and navy and those of their countrymen were upon them. During the furious fire their one thought was to close with the enemy, and, marvelous to relate, but six men had been struck by the shower of bullets, and but three of these were more than slightly wounded. As they stood there forming into line, they were all impatient to charge up the bank, although above their heads was the bristling row of British bayonets. The men dressed as quickly and silently as if for inspection, and no sooner was the line formed than Scott gave the order to charge. With a long, rolling cheer they sprang forward. On knee and elbow, they clawed their way up the steep bank, helping, pushing and assisting each other; a man with a good hold on a root or branch would extend his hand back to the next below him and haul him along. In less than half a minute three-fourths of them had reached the brink. But before they could form, or even present a line, they were met by such a withering fire and such a determined onslaught that they fell back. Scott was the second man to reach the top; the first was a sergeant of infantry, who fell dead, shot through the body. For a single second Scott stood there almost alone while the men scrambled up on all sides of him. Just as the British let go their volley, the bank beneath the young colonel's feet crumbled, and he fell back, bringing one or two others with him, to the beach beneath.

General Dearborn, from one of the ships that were now preparing to land the other brigade, was watching the attack through his glass. Distinctly he saw Scott's tall figure standing there, and saw him come down like a mighty ninepin among his men.

"He's lost, he's killed!" he cried aloud in his anguish, knowing that without their leader the troops would lose most of their impetuous dash and courage. But, to his delight, he saw Scott spring to his feet, and, waving his sword in one hand and his hat in the other, encourage his men to a second attempt. Up the brave fellows went again, their cheers sounding louder and fiercer than ever, and this time they made a lodgment on the bank.

They found many of the British lying almost prone upon the ground in order to stab at them as they reached the top. They were forced to kick the bayonets up with their feet, and steel clashed against steel.

A great cheer rolled up from the ships. The boats that were now returning toward the shore redoubled their efforts, the men at the oars working like demons. The line was hastily dressed, and then charged forward. They closed fiercely with the enemy, and in twenty minutes drove them in every direction. Colonel Forsythe, who had effected a landing below, pursued them some distance into the woods. Those of the British who had taken refuge in the fort made a short defense of it, but so swift was the attack of the Americans that the English had scarce time to fire the train and magazines and apply the torch before the regulars were pouring over the bastions and escarpments.

Scott, who had pressed on past the fort, wheeled two of his companies and ordered them to climb the walls, put down their arms, and arrest the flames. He himself led them. When only fifty yards distance from the main gate one of the smaller magazines exploded and a bit of timber struck the colonel on the shoulder, hurling him from his horse. Every one about him thought that he was killed, but, though severely hurt, he picked himself up and was the first to reach the gate. The men attacked it with the butts of their muskets, and the sappers wielded their heavy axes and mauls with such great effect that it shattered before them, and they entered the enclosed space. Directly before them were the burning

storehouses and magazines, built of pine logs banked with earth.

Captains Hindman and Stockton snatched away the matches that had been applied to two of the larger magazines, and the works were saved; but Scott all alone had rushed on beyond the buildings to where the flagstaff stood. At the top was still waving the British flag. Instantly he seized the halyards and began to lower the colors. A loud voice panted at his side :

"Confound your long legs, Scott! you got in before me!"

Turning, the young colonel saw that it was his friend [Moses] Porter, who had seen the flag, and, although in command of the field-artillery, had rushed forward in order to be first at the foot of the flagstaff. Scott hardly took time to reply. He put the flag into Porter's hands, and, making a leap to the stockade in the rear of the fort, vaulted over it. Running out he placed himself once more at the head of his regiment that were pursuing the British across the open toward the woods. An order to halt and to return had been sent to his column, but he disregarded it, and for five miles he pressed forward until stopped by Major Boyd in person. Scores of prisoners were taken, among them many officers, and one in particular whose capture completes a little incident that had begun at Queenstown.

As some of the prisoners were being sent to the rear he noticed among them a British officer of the Forty-second, now a colonel. Calling up the lieutenant in charge of the prisoners, he requested him to be sure that this officer in particular had every courtesy and privilege accorded him. It was an opportunity to fulfill the old adage about the coals of fire.

The prisoners were sent across the river to Fort Niagara, and here it was that the sequel to the story we related in the last chapter took place. Scott's orders respecting the captured British colonel—the very one who had been so rude to him at the time of his own capture—had been carried into effect. The officer had been overwhelmed with kindness and attention, his every want supplied, and it was Scott's fortune to meet him, when he was seated at the table with the American officers, a prisoner. No sooner had the colonel seen Scott, than he rose, and, with a great deal of dignity

and the most charmingly polite manner, said to him before the assembled officers:

"I have long owed you an apology, sir; you have overwhelmed me with kindness. You can now at your leisure view the falls in all their glory."

There is some discrepancy in the various reports of killed and wounded in this action, General Dearborn giving his losses as but 17 killed and 45 wounded, while the British was 60 killed, 90 wounded, and 100 taken prisoners. The British reports almost reversed the casualties.

In July, Scott resigned his position as chief of staff and again took command of a double regiment. He was left in charge of Fort George while the preparations for the great conquest of Canada were being completed, under the directions of his old enemy, General Wilkinson. Scott prophesied that nothing but disaster could come of it, for, like many others, he doubted Wilkinson's capacity, and knew well that the majority of the troops did not trust in either his judgment or his courage. The young colonel, however, had plenty of work of his own, repairing and strengthening the fortifications directly under his management and in keeping in touch with the positions of the enemy, who were never more than a day's march to the west and south.

Several rather amusing messages passed between Scott and the British general. On one occasion the latter sent an immediate summons for him to surrender his position, "as otherwise he would be compelled to storm the fort,"to which warning he added the sentence, "I will not be responsible for the Indians." Scott smiled when he had read the short note and did not deign to write one in reply, but, turning to the messenger who stood waiting, he said: "Tell your general to come on and storm the fort—I will be responsible for the Indians."

In course of time Wilkinson began his movement down the lake, the British abandoning their camp and preparing to oppose the landing. Scott received orders to join the main body with the regular troops that were under him. He had expected that Commodore Chauncey's vessels would transport him and his command down the lake, but

Wilkinson refused to allow the fleet to be used for that purpose, and Scott, much against his will, was compelled to start on foot for Sacketts Harbor, marching by way of Genesee River, Canandaigua, and Utica. The roads were heavy with mud and at places almost impassable. For three days it rained a heavy downpour, and the meadows and flats were flooded knee-deep. A short distance from Utica he met the Secretary of War, and from him obtained permission to push forward with a small following to the St. Lawrence, to join Wilkinson. Making strenuous efforts to catch up with the main army before it should assume active operations, he succeeded in overtaking it at Ogdensburg. Here, armed with his letter from the Secretary, he was given the command of the first battalion under Colonel Macomb, and was detailed to lead the advance-guard down the St. Lawrence. As he pushed ahead, feeling his way for the army behind him, he had several skirmishes with the enemy. At Chrysler's farm there occurred one of those smaller fights that might have developed into important actions, but amounted to little owing to the mistakes and inaction of the commanding officer; for Wilkinson began to show more and more his feebleness and inefficiency, and on the 12th of November, hearing that the British had amassed large forces to oppose his farther progress, he ordered his grand army of invasion to the rightabout, and retreated before a shadow. Afterward he endeavored to explain his behavior on the ground that Hampton, for personal reasons, had refused to join him with his division; but even if this were so, it was not sufficient to justify his conduct, and, as a contemporary remarked, "had Scott been placed over that army, the American flag in a few days would have waved above Montreal."

CHAPTER VII

CHIPPEWA TO NIAGARA

The army from which so much had been expected now went into winter quarters and Scott was sent to Albany to take charge of recruiting.

In the early spring of 1814, at the youthful age of twenty-eight, he was promoted to the rank of brigadier-general, and was ordered to Buffalo to take a position under his superior, General Brown. The latter left him there to superintend the camp of instruction. Scott was convinced of one thing, the necessity for the instilling of military discipline and military knowledge into the army. The American methods were exceedingly antiquated. The system of tactics then employed had been handed down from the Revolutionary times, and Scott's wide reading on military subjects now stood him in good stead. He started schools for the officers, many of whom were most ignorant upon military subjects, and a constant and severe course of drill followed with the regiments under him. These consisted of his own old command, Ripley's brigade of the regular army, Colonel Hindman's battalion of artillery, and Porter's brigade of the militia.

Every day, rain or shine, for three months these brigades were exercised and handled, and by the end of that time even the militia were steady and absolutely trustworthy. The whole division was as able as a body of Napoleon's veterans. And all this told, as we shall see; for probably no men that served under any flag were subjected to so great a strain and came out of it with such a noble record.

Retreating they may have practised, as prescribed by military requirements, but one thing they had been taught by their commander: that retreat was the last thing to be thought of, and, as shall be seen, he had imbued every single man with his own imperturbable spirit and dauntless bravery.

In the latter part of June General Brown returned from Sacketts Harbor and began to make his preparations for the third invasion of Canada. On the 3d of July, with the whole of his army, he crossed

the Niagara River and took Fort Erie without a struggle.

It was the intention to press forward at once and to engage the main body of the British under General Raill that was encamped and partly entrenched at Chippewa, scarcely more than a long day's march distant. Before the advance began, Scott, who, with his brigade, led the advance, had the word passed: "Remember the day! This is the 4th of July!" No doubt the knowledge infused a particular keenness through the American lines, for they marched with such vigor that they drove in the British advance-guard under the Marquis of Tweesdale, and never halting, kept him before them for sixteen miles, almost at the double.

The marquis subsequently, in speaking of the activity and determination of the American troops, stated that he could not account for it until the day and Scott's watchword were brought to his mind.

Just at dark the marquis, with the Americans at his heels, crossed the Chippewa River, behind which lay the Whole of the British army. Now the Chippewa enters the Niagara River almost at right angles, and about two miles farther up a little stream called Street's Creek joins the Niagara also. Behind it General Brown drew up the American force. Between the streams lay an open plain, on one side bounded by the river, and on the other by deep woods. Just at daybreak on the morning of the 5th, General Brown determined to advance and to attack the British, and at the same hour General Raill determined on a similar movement. The English crossed the bridge over the Chippewa at the same time that the Americans forded the creek.

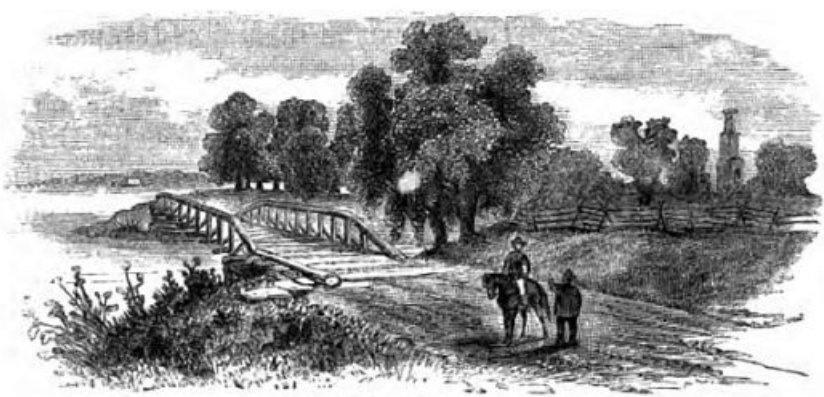
An irregular fight began in the woods on the left between Porter's brigade and the Canadian militia, the latter being driven back to the banks of the Chippewa, where General Raill, who had by this time crossed, advanced to their support. Before this formidable array Porter's brigade fell back. General Brown, hastening on, passed by Scott's brigade, that had just formed in marching order, and were crossing the creek.

"The enemy is advancing—you will have to fight," General Brown said to Scott.

"We will be ready, sir," was the latter's reply.

The young general, however, was ignorant of the fact that the British had pushed on so far, and, to his surprise, as he reached the bank, he saw drawn up in front of him, in the open field, the whole of the British army. Line upon line of red coats and white cross-belts, standing as if at drill. The creek was deep, it was necessary for Scott's brigade to cross a wooden bridge, and, to his dismay, he perceived that it was commanded by a battery of nine pieces that stood at almost point-blank range.

No sooner had his own men appeared in sight than this battery opened fire, but not a single company delayed, not a man halted. To the music of a band of twenty pieces the Americans pressed forward, and company after company crossed the bridge.



View of the Bridge over which Scott's troops attacked.
View looking north in 1860.
(engraving from Benson John Lossing, *The Pictorial Field-book of the War of 1812*,
New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1869, 806.)

The fire of the battery was steady and incessant. But there being but little wind, the smoke hanging over them after their first discharge obscured their aim, and, although the American ranks were considerably thinned, the lines reached the plain unbroken. The First and Second Battalions, under Major Leavenworth and Major McNeil, took up a position in front of the left and center of the enemy, while Jesup, who commanded the third, obliqued to the

farther side, toward the woods, in order to attack the British right, which threatened to outflank the American line. It was a beautiful July day. The sun was unobscured by a single cloud, and before the fight had actually begun the dust from the marching regiments drifted lazily across the plain and mingled with the white fumes of the smoke from the batteries that still kept up a continuous fire. Farther beyond rose the gleaming spray from the Niagara Falls, and over the shock of the guns rose the deep-toned roar of the cataract.

Battles in the old days were spectacular in a way that modern battles never can be. In plain sight, halting, firing, and advancing, as if in mock combat, the two armies neared. At last they stood within 80 yards of each other, receiving and giving volleys almost as if in play, although men were falling in the ranks, the companies, as they stepped forward, closing up the wide and bloody gaps.

Scott was playing the game of his life. He had a plan in his head that, granted two things, he knew would give him victory. It was his endeavor to get the two battalions of Leavenworth and McNeil in an oblique position to the British lines, and, if the men stood and the movements were made simultaneously, he felt sure of his success. At last, to his delight, he saw them reach the coveted positions, the American extremities being nearest the enemy, the British line forming the base of an obtuse triangle. All at once he saw that Towson's battery, obscured in its own smoke, had not noticed that the British had changed their position. The fire was directed too far to the right, and was expending itself harmlessly in the British rear. Without a thought of his own danger, Scott put spurs to his horse, and galloped directly across the triangle. How he escaped was a miracle, for he was subject to the cross-fire from both armies. His own men, soon perceiving him, started cheering, and the cheer rolled down the line continuously until he had reached Towson's guns. Reining in his horse, and throwing him almost back upon his haunches, Scott turned and pointed:

"A little more to the left, captain," he shouted; "the enemy is there."

Instantly the direction of the field-pieces was changed, and a raking and destructive fire pierced the British ranks. One lucky shot struck an ammunition wagon, and, blowing it up, spread destruction and consternation on every side. Scott, now at a gallop, rode up to

McNeil's battalion; his eyes were flashing and his face blazing with excitement. Swinging his hat at arm's length, he tore down the line.

"The enemy say we are good at long shot, but can not stand cold iron. I call upon the Eleventh instantly to give the lie to that slander. Charge!" he shouted.

Just then Towson's entire battery reopened its destructive fire. Replacing his hat and lifting himself in his stirrups at the same time he drew his sword, Scott reiterated the command:

"Charge! Charge!"

[*General Riall had thus far believed that he was engaging an American force made up mostly of unreliable militia. It is roughly at this point in the battle that General Riall is thought to have realized his error and exclaimed, "Those are regulars, by God!" as Scott's well-trained soldiers advanced despite their losses.--Ed.*]

With a wild cheer the gallant battalion rushed forward with leveled bayonets. They took volley and volley almost in their faces, but never stopped. Although the front rank dwindled and shattered, they closed up while on the run, and striking the British line obliquely, crumbled it to pieces, and swept forward bayoneting and clubbing their way through the red-coated ranks. At the same time Leavenworth had advanced impetuously on the right, and Jesup, although not knowing how the other two battalions had fared, but fearing that he might be outflanked, commanded his troops to support arms and advance. They cheerfully charged home, and, obtaining a better position, stopped the flanking movement and poured in their volleys, creating frightful carnage. The armies now were almost mingled throughout the whole length of the line. Every portion was engaged, and the firing was so incessant and destructive and the uproar so terrific that the loudest shouted orders could not be heard more than a few feet away. But Scott, with the assistance of his aides. Lieutenants Worth and Watts, kept in touch with the commanding officers. He himself was here and there and everywhere. No one had faltered, no one had misunderstood, and no soldiers, however brave, could stand that determined and concerted action. The British fell back to the river, many were drowned in attempting to ford it, but the main body

crossed the bridge successfully, the rear-guard destroying it to prevent the Americans from following.

"Regulars, by God"
(U.S. Army Center of Military History)

The suddenness of the hush that fell over the battle-field was almost as appalling as the discord had been a few minutes previous. By sunset not a shot was heard; only the roaring of the majestic falls, and out on the plains the moans of the wounded broke the stillness of the summer evening. There were almost 4,000 men engaged in the fight, and nearly 800 lay killed or wounded as the sun went down—almost one-fifth of all engaged. Few bloodier battles were ever fought between civilized armies. The British were in consternation. They had been told that the American troops knew nothing of the bayonet; they had always claimed that it was their own way of fighting, and that the Americans would give way in the open field. They could scarcely believe the evidence of their own senses. They could hardly credit the fact that their own veteran ranks had been crushed and crumbled under the headlong charges of the American infantry.

General Brown had been surprised when he found that Scott had the whole of the British army in front of him, and he had hurried to the rear to bring on Ripley's brigade. But they were not needed; the field was cleared before they could arrive. Scott greeted McNeil

after the battle.

"Major," he said, "I knew we could give the lie to that slander, and I knew I spoke for every man in your ranks when I called upon them. We showed them what we could do with the cold steel, and we will show it again."

The fact was that in McNeil's battalion there was not a single recruit, and most of the men Scott knew personally. They were the same that had followed him when he had led them at Fort George.

In Leavenworth's battalion there were a few volunteers, among them a company of backwoodsmen from the Adirondack country. Little did they know of the manual of arms, less had they ever heard of the school of the company; but they had fought in Indian conflicts many times, and they were accustomed with their long-barreled rifles to make long, sunset shots at wary bucks on the edges of the lakes, or to pick squirrels out of the tallest trees. Only two or three days before the action Major Leavenworth had attempted to train these men and to give them some knowledge of military formation. It was while thus employed Scott himself had approached, and seeing that the major's efforts were not very successful, he had asked permission to try to see what he could do with them. A few minutes convinced him that even his knowledge was of no avail. He saw that they were of the stuff of which fighting men are made, but he recognized the futility of accomplishing three months' work in three hours' time.

"Major," he said, "I leave you your men," and rode away.

When Leavenworth had advanced, these backwoodsmen had gone forward with the regulars; although they had no bayonets for their guns, they had not faltered for an instant. Gradually spreading out, each man had become a unit fighting for himself, but still pressing on, and their shots were not wasted. Before the position that they occupied lay the largest number of British killed by bullets. Of course, in places where the deadly bayonet had been at work the ground was covered with bleeding forms; but the value of straight shooting was forced home upon the American general's mind, and the value of long-distance and accurate rifles also, for one of the officers reported that before the armies came to a hand to hand

conflict, each one of those cool and determined riflemen was as good as ten men who fired wildly and blindly.

Scott himself had thought of this company in the middle of the action, and he had ridden over to the extremity of the line where he had placed them (in order that they should interfere in the least possible manner with the maneuvering), and there to his delighted surprise he had found them obeying no orders but the orders to advance, each man a captain unto himself; and as one of them who knew not how to salute, but who knew what he was placed there for, replied: "We're throwing no shots away here, general."

Scott rode off satisfied.

For two days the American army rested, burying the dead, sending back the wounded, and replenishing their stores. Then, Scott's brigade leading, they crossed the Chippewa, the British retreating before them to Burlington Heights, near the head of Lake Ontario.

The spirit of the American troops was so fine and their ardor so intense that General Brown resolved no longer to delay for reenforcements; and although he knew that he was largely outnumbered, he determined to advance and to attack the British where they were. Supplies were gathered, and on the 25th of July plans were made for the battle which he expected would take place on the next morning, the 26th.

Late in the afternoon of the 25th a tired messenger who had crossed the river and traveled in the wake of the army on foot came into the camp inquiring for General Brown; and then was heard the startling news that a thousand British troops had crossed the river the evening before and were on their way to seize Lewiston and the American camp and magazines at Fort Schlosser.

Brown knew that his train of supply wagons were on their way from Buffalo, and unless he could divert the English attack he might find himself in a precarious position. He hastily called a consultation of his officers, and it was reasoned that if an attack was now made on the British lines a diversion would follow, and the troops already sent to the American side be forced to return. Within twenty minutes after arriving at this decision Scott, with a detachment of

1,200 men, was moving forward in the direction of the fort at the mouth of the Niagara. He proceeded with the utmost caution, and had traversed some two miles, when his scouts brought in word that some redcoats were to be seen at the edge of a strip of wood less than a mile ahead. Riding forward, Scott through his glass perceived that they were mounted officers evidently re-connoitering. In a few minutes they had disappeared.

Turning to one of his aides, he ordered the troops to be deployed along a road that crossed his path and that led down toward the river. This brought almost his entire force into one long line. When everything was in readiness he ordered the men forward, and just as he cleared the road and gained a slight elevation, he paused in astonishment. Before him he saw an army of at least 2,000 drawn up awaiting battle. Quickly he looked back at his own force that had now come in plain view of the enemy and had halted. He turned at once to Lieutenant Richard Douglas, who was mounted on a fine horse, and ordered him to hasten back at once to the main body of troops and inform the commanding general of the situation. A few minutes later he sent back another officer with a second message, insisting upon urgent haste. Although ignorant of the numbers opposed to him, and also ignorant of several other things which were of great importance, the first being that two nights before General Sir Gordon Drummond had arrived with reenforcements for the British and that Raill had not sent any troops across to Niagara, Scott determined to begin the action, trusting to holding his own unaided until the reserve should reach him.

The main British line, almost 2,000 strong, was posted on a ridge in Lundy's Lane, running at right angles to the river. Major Jesup and Colonel Brady were ordered to occupy a space covered with small timber, and to attempt to turn the enemy's left.

Time sped on while both armies maneuvered in silence. But soon the British discovered that they outflanked the Americans on the left, and General Raill advanced a battalion to turn them and take them in the rear. McNeil's men met them and shattered the British advance, although his loss in doing so was great. In the meantime Jesup had thrown forward his men so quickly through the underbrush that they had got around the flank of the enemy and

were behind them. Turning, he charged back, taking the British by surprise, and to his delight he captured the commanding General Raill and his whole staff! The word was sent down the American line and greeted with loud cheers.

But now a British battery of seven pieces that had been placed in position opened fire. It was so dark that the Americans had not perceived them being hauled into position, and the first notice of their presence was the red flash from the guns. Loaded with grape and round shot, they played upon the crowded American ranks that were slowly pushing forward. Scott's regiments were soon almost cut to pieces. A fourth of the whole brigade fell inside of twenty minutes. The battery—increased to nine guns, (five 24-pounders and four howitzers)—kept up its fire. A cannon-ball bounding from the ground killed Scott's horse and hurled him headlong. He arose much bruised, and taking another mount, offered by one of the artillerymen, he dashed along the line with such gay spirits and reckless courage that the troops caught the infection. Not a man yielded; even the wounded tried to keep their places in the ranks. The Eleventh and Twenty-second Regiments, that had lost their commanders and had expended all their ammunition, were ordered to fall back to the left and rear and reform. Leavenworth with the Ninth was compelled to stand the whole shock of the battle. Towson's little battery, placed in a hollow, fired without much result at the flashes of the British guns, but, as they were well over the crest of the hill, a fact that he did not ascertain until too late, the shots did little harm.

Leavenworth's men now appeared to be surrounded by a semicircle of fire, but still they held their ground, and Scott, galloping over to them, sought out their commander. Leavenworth was slightly wounded, but smiled grimly as the young general rode up.

"How goes it, sir?" Scott asked.

"Your rule for retreating is fulfilled, general," Leavenworth replied. "One-half of my men are killed or wounded. But we will hold on should you desire it."

Scott's heart almost failed him, but he knew the disaster that would follow any order to fall back. He reasoned that General Brown

could not be far away. Yet the case was desperate! Unless help soon arrived he would have to call off the bleeding fragment of his band of heroes. At just that moment he heard a cheer rising from some distance in the rear. The reserves were coming! Pointing to the flag that the gallant Ninth still kept flying at the center of their firing line, he told them to keep it there and hold their ground.

The flashes from the guns were now almost the only light, although a sickly moon strove to pierce the clouds of smoke. As he turned to leave Leavenworth, a shot brought down his horse, and when Scott got up on his feet again he discovered that he was wounded in the arm and bleeding. On foot and followed by Lieutenant Worth, he walked toward the right, where the firing had been again renewed. He saw at once that of the 1,200 that had crossed the river with him he had only some 500 remaining, but they were fighting bravely. Suddenly he perceived some men coming forward on horseback, and to his delight he recognized General Brown and his staff. Ripley's brigade was now coming on the field, and Porter, with the volunteers, was but a few hundred yards behind him. Lieutenant Riddle, with some 200 men who had been off on a scouting expedition, now came in from the left. He had received no orders, but had started on hearing the sound of the cannonading, and coming at full run across the country, had arrived in the nick of time.

General Brown, upon hearing Scott's account of what had happened, rode back and brought on Ripley's brigade, ordering them to form in advance of the exhausted regulars. At the same moment that the American reenforcements arrived, the English numbers were augmented also, and now must have numbered nearly 4,000 men. Strange to say, with the coming of the new forces there followed a lull in the battle. The rumble of wheels could be heard, and the shouts of men urging on struggling horses. It was evident that the British were moving their battery to a better position.

"Those guns must be taken, general," urged Scott, grasping Brown's arm. "They must be taken." The commander-in-chief turned to Colonel Miller, who was standing close beside him.

"Colonel," he said, "can you take that battery? "

The brave young soldier looked at the dark crest of the hill.

"I will try, sir," he replied, saluting.

Immediately the Twenty-first Regiment was brought up. Miller at once placed himself at its head. Major M'Farland with the Twenty-third was to act as the supporting line. Miller had not seen the ground that lay between him and the hill, and turning to Scott, he asked a few questions.

"I will pilot you," the general replied. "When all is ready follow me."

At Miller's side he moved forward in the darkness, the steady tramping infantry behind them; keeping a little to the left, and passing by an old church and graveyard that showed dimly in the moonlight, they were soon at the beginning of the sloping ground.

Here Scott left them, and returned. And now, in close order and in absolute silence, elbow to elbow, and knee to knee, the two regiments moved straight for the battery. Drummond's men lined the crest of the hill, and it was only by the muffled tread that the approach of the Americans was detected. Then the darkness was ripped and gashed by the red tongues of flame. The whole battery opened at less than 200 yards. It happened that the second regiment, the Twenty-third, got most of the discharge. It reeled back in the gloom, reformed again, and pressed on, following the Twenty-first, that was now advancing at the double.

"Close up, close up! Steady, men!" officers shouted, and forward the brave fellows went.

Another volley caught the luckless Twenty-third, and absolutely hurled them back. But yet the Twenty-first went on and never fired a shot. The flickering red lights from the enemy's musketry showed them their goal, their bayonets gleamed in the glare; as the men fell the ranks closed up, and now the explosion of the battery revealed the whole hillside and the British saw the dark columns pushing toward them. Over the bodies of their dead comrades, urged on by the cries of their own wounded, the invincible regiment kept straight for the guns. In amazement the British watched them come. It was to be cold steel against cold steel again. When just in front of

the battery and but fifteen paces distant, two guns whose fire had been delayed were discharged. It was this minute that Miller shouted:

"Charge, men, and over them!" The next instant the remnants of the shattered regiment swept with a great shout, half-scream, half-cheer, over the guns and gunners and the supporting Grenadiers. Now in the darkness followed the hand-to-hand fighting, cursing and cutting, stabbing and clubbing; in the tall grass and bushes, bayonet crossed bayonet. The clubbed muskets rose and fell and the fight was like the old ones of medieval times, when men's strength told and muscle and hardihood of frame bore down the weaker man. A panic seemed to seize the British; down the other side of the hill they rushed, and now all that was left of the Twenty-third, coming forward on the double, M'Farland leading, joined their victorious comrades on the hill. They even passed by them and formed between the captured guns and the foe in the farther hollow.

Ripley, hearing the cheers, moved forward his brigade to the top of the hill in order to keep what had been won. But Drummond, maddened with rage and mortification, was riding to and fro among his scattered forces. Two fresh regiments were brought up from the center, and the lines reforming, the Englishmen determined to retake the guns at any cost. What had now gone on on the one side of the hill was repeated on the other. Bravely the veterans of Old England came back to the attack. The Americans now could hear their approaching footsteps. When within thirty paces the redcoats, with their white cross-belts, became visible and broke forward on the run. So fierce a volley met them that they were turned back again and helter-skelter found safety in the wooden hollow.

Rallying again, they returned once more, and this time reached the guns. Once more it was hand to hand in the darkness; men could not distinguish their foes until within striking distance. To and fro in a death grapple they lurched hither and thither over the rough stones and among the bushes. But for the second time the British line broke, and what was left of it disappeared into the darkness.

General Ripley now reformed again, and Scott, who had been working hard, succeeded in getting one single battalion out of the

fragments of his whole brigade, and with them he took his place beside Ripley on the hill. General Drummond now called forth every endeavor for a final attempt. The whole of the British army with the exception of a few flanking companies was brought up, and the whole of its strength was directed on the center of the American line. But here stood all that were left of the gallant Twenty-first, whose impetuous charge had swept the hill. They stood like rocks. Never would they give up what it had cost them so much to gain. Their spirit infused itself among the younger regiments and was caught by the volunteers. Scott, in the meantime, had led his battalion down the hill toward where, indistinctly, he could see the movements of the British as they formed for the attack. It was his intention to take them in the flank and rear as they advanced; but before he had gone far a cruel volley met him, actually cutting the middle out of his battalion and separating it into two small divisions; and as the volley came the British line advanced again. The two little companies Scott commanded did not falter. They hurled themselves on the oncoming force with such vehemence that it shattered before them. Scott was again mounted on a borrowed horse, and once more came to the ground, his steed shot dead through the body. His friend Jesup, severely wounded and reeling in his efforts to keep his balance, hastened to him. Ammunition was becoming scarce; guns had been broken in the clubbing fight, but the wounded extended their own weapons to their comrades.

"Take mine," a man would cry.

"And mine; my gun is in good order, and my cartridge-box is full."

Jesup's flag, under which four men had been killed already, was carried by a brave sergeant, who, though severely wounded in the thigh, was able to stay with his comrades.

Scott had just risen to his feet and Jesup was standing beside him when a terrific volley leveled almost half of the men about them. Down went the sergeant, and when he struggled upright again it was seen that the staff of the flag was severed in three pieces. With the colors almost winding about him, he turned to his commander.

"Look, colonel," he cried, "how they have cut us up!"

Then bravely he attempted to wave the flag about his head, but his strength gave way and he pitched forward, first on one knee and then at full length, and in a few minutes he expired.

But now the British attack had been repulsed, and for the third time rolled down the hill. The Americans stood leaning on their guns, the barrels of which were almost too hot to be touched.

It was by this time midnight, the moon was high and its soft light, as the battle smoke drifted away, shone peacefully down upon the bloody scene. About the guns and for 300 yards along the hill it was difficult to move without stepping on the bodies of dead or wounded men. Linked together, with their limbs entwined, friend and foe-man lay there where the carnage had been thickest.

It was thought that the British had had enough, and that there would be no more attacks; but the bulldog spirit had been aroused, and in an hour, just as the moon went under a cloud, a bugle rang loud and clear, and on they came. There were fresh men added to the attacking party now, for they had brought up the last line of reserves. It was the forlorn hope, but it was to be a mighty effort. Undaunted by their previous repulses, again they reached the hilltop; again the same scenes were enacted as before. Scott stood beside Jesup and was looking at a wound the latter had just received in his hand, when a man near to them cried out:

"Cartridges! More cartridges!" Another brave fellow at that moment reeling to the ground, attempted to haul himself erect by the aid of the branches of a little tree. "Cartridges—in my box," he replied.

Both Scott and Jesup hastened to him. Just as the former caught him by the arm the poor fellow collapsed and died. Scott was placing him tenderly on the ground when an ounce ball crashed through his shoulder beneath the epaulet, and he fell insensible beside the brave private. Jesup called two men to his aid, and with some difficulty, for the young general was so heavy, they moved him to the rear and laid him down) in the shelter of a small tree, and there Jesup himself fainted from loss of blood.

They moved him to the rear.

picture1

But the British had been repulsed for the fourth time and had fled; the Americans still held their ground.

The brave British general, Drummond, had been taken to the rear severely wounded, but now the terrible losses on the American side became apparent. General Brown had been carried from the field a half-hour before badly hit, but he had given orders that the soldiers should not be told.

But one officer out of every four of the Americans was on his feet, and many of them were wounded also! Scott, unable to hold up his head from loss of blood, was carried back and placed in an ambulance and taken to the farther side of the Chippewa. The command devolved upon Ripley, who, although he had fought bravely, was unequal to the occasion.

Gathering up the wounded as well as he could, he fell back slowly from the now deserted hill. Owing to the fact that he had no horses, he had found it impossible to move the guns, for the possession of which so much blood had been spilt. Many of the officers at first refused to leave, they sent for Scott, but when they heard the sad news that he lay almost at the point of death, they too lost heart. In the meantime the British were in full retreat, a fact that owing to the darkness Ripley did not know. An Indian scout, however, just before daybreak reached them and told them of the American retirement. Slowly and cautiously they returned and ascertained the truth, and the next night they bivouacked on the field, and General Drummond claimed the victory.

But Lundy's Lane can be carried with glory on the flags of both nations. In proportion to the numbers engaged, a bloodier battle was never fought; it exceeded even that of three weeks previously at Chippewa. Nearly 800 Americans and as many English had fallen on the slope of that single hill. Seventy-six officers on the American side were either killed or wounded, out of an army of less than 3,000 men. Not a general on either side remained unhurt. Even Ripley, although the last general officer on the field, was partially disabled by a wounded arm.

Scott was dreadfully shattered; his shoulder was crushed badly, and for a long time his recovery was in doubt. It was September before he was able to travel, then slowly and with great caution he was invalided home on furlough. Everywhere he went he was received with great ovation. He arrived at Princeton, N. J., on commencement day, and the faculty at once sent a committee requesting his attendance at Nassau Hall. He arrived in the midst of the ceremonies, and was escorted to the platform, weak and leaning on the arm of his aide-de-camp, Captain Worth. Cheer after cheer rang through the building. The students rose to their feet. He was so weak that with difficulty he could respond by even a few words, but a flush passed over his pallid features. His eye kindled and he felt that reward that springs in the soldier's heart—the only reward he values—the consciousness of having obtained a place in the affections of his countrymen. Princeton granted him the honorary degree of master of arts, and amid the redoubled cheers it was handed hini. He could scarcely make a reply.

After a few days' rest, although still weak, he passed on to Baltimore, that was then threatened by a British attack, and by the middle of October he had so far recovered that he was able to take command of the Tenth Military District, with his headquarters at Washington. At Baltimore he passed most of the winter.

The treaty of peace between America and England was signed in February, and as soon as the news had reached this country Scott, almost by popular acclamation, was offered the position of Secretary of War, but on the ground of his youth he declined the honor, for he was but twenty-eight years of age. He was then requested to serve as secretary until the American minister, Mr. Crawford, could return from Paris, for the latter had been appointed in his place. But out of respect to General Brown and to General Jackson, he also refused this mark of reward and distinction on the ground that he could not thus supersede his superiors, for the Secretary, under the President, has control of the army.

One thing, however, he knew well. Wherever he had seen his duty he had performed it to the best of his ability. His countrymen knew this, and in that lay his great comfort.

CHAPTER VIII

HONORS WON

Medal Awarded to Winfield Scott, 1814
(engraving from Benson John Lossing, *The Pictorial Field-book of the War of 1812*,
New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1869, 826.)

The country was left in a very unsettled condition at the end of the war. It took some time for the people to pick up the loosened threads of their daily life and return to their peaceful labors. The reduction of the army from a war footing to one of peace required no small labor, and to the successful accomplishment of the disbanding of the military forces that had been in continuous service for almost four years Scott lent his best efforts, and so valuable were they that the Government, as a reward, not only granted him a leave of absence from active duty, but sent him to Europe for the purpose of restoring his health and also to enable him to profit by the knowledge of military subjects that he might gain by extensive travel through a country that had just passed through one of the greatest wars of all history.

He was, in a measure, also the representative of the State Department, and endowed with certain diplomatic powers.

America was much exercised at this time over the revolutionary

movement in the Spanish possessions in the Western Hemisphere, and great fears were entertained in regard to England's designs upon some of the islands in the West Indies, especially the island of Cuba. Scott was instructed to find out, if possible, the real intention of England and of Spain.

Everywhere the young general was received with hospitality and great courtesy. He had letters to the principal military leaders of Europe, then filled with men who had taken part in the great campaigns of Napoleon. Waterloo had just been fought, and the ex-Emperor of the French was a homeless fugitive.

Scott visited all the great battle-fields on the Continent. With the keen eye that was his special gift, he took in everything and absorbed a knowledge of the fundamental principles of the science of war, as put in actual practise, that stood him in good stead afterward, as shall be proved.

In England, where he spent some months, he was well received. His quondam enemies extended him the hand of friendship, and his own personality and his great charm of manner helped him to make his way everywhere.

In February of 1816 he was stopping in London, preparatory to his setting sail for his own country, and there, on one occasion, while dining at the house of Lord Holland, where he had been asked to meet a number of officers, all or most of whom had served in the American campaign, an amusing little incident took place. Just before the gentlemen went in to dinner. Lord Holland brought forward a young man in naval uniform.

"General Scott," said his kindly host, "I wish to present to you Captain Fox, commander of the *Goshawk*. He is very anxious to meet you."

The young man, who was not over twenty-six years of age, extended his hand.

"You will pardon me, general," he said, "but since I came into the room and set eyes on you I have been most desirous of asking you a question, and I am sure you will forgive me if I am at all forward in

doing so."

"Pray ask it, sir," Scott replied, smiling down upon him.

"In 1807 I was in your country," the young officer went on, " and near Lynn Haven Bay, in Virginia, I was captured, or, to better put it, entertained right royally, by a certain Corporal Scott of a body of Virginia light horse. Your appearance and your remarkable height and stature precludes all doubt that you are one and the same. I think we have met before."

"We have, indeed, sir," Scott replied. "I remember your visit with the greatest of pleasure."

The captain laughed.

"It is a most remarkable country, yours," he said, "a most remarkable country, sir. Less than ten years ago you were a corporal, and now you are a major-general. I suppose in no other service could such a thing happen. But, if you will allow me to make a remark, it is just that quick recognition of merit that causes your service to have the advantage of any other. I said to myself, after I had returned to my ship from your hospitable treatment of me, that should a war take place, you would be heard from. My surmise was altogether correct. It is a great honor to meet you, general, and I will request, before you leave London, that you will allow me to attempt to return, in a measure, your courtesy."

Captain Fox requested that Scott would dine with him; an invitation which was promptly accepted. A most pleasant intimacy began that lasted during the whole of Scott's stay in England.

During this same dinner another little incident took place that is worth recording. The dinner had been given in special compliment to the Earl of Lauderdale, and sitting near the general at the table was a near relative of the earl, who was a captain in the British navy. He was no less than the officer who had command of the *Bellerophon*, and who had received Napoleon the time that the latter became the enforced guest of the British nation.

During a lull in the conversation the captain turned to Scott.

"I would like to ask you, sir," he inquired in an affected and rather mincing manner, "whether the Americans continue to build line-of-battle ships and to call them frigates?"

Scott paused a minute before he replied. There was much bitter feeling in the English navy at the time, owing to the records of the separate actions that had taken place between the American and English ships of war at sea. Out of thirty-one separate engagements, the Americans had won twenty-nine. But it had been a complaint with the English that we had always, in the reports, understated the armament of our vessels, and that our frigates, though rated as such, "had the scantling and armaments of 74's in disguise."

Scott saw that the people seated about the table were awaiting his reply. Lord Holland, who had always been a friend of America and had married an American lady, flushed angrily, for the question certainly bordered upon the offensive.

"We have borrowed, sir, a great many excellent things from the mother country," Scott replied at last, "and some that discredit both parties, perhaps; among the latter is the practise in question. Thus when you took from France the *Guerrière*, she mounted 49 guns, and you instantly rated her on your list as a 36-gun frigate, but when we captured her from you we found on board the same number—49 guns."

The assembled company smiled at the discomfited captain, and the Earl of Lauderdale rose to the occasion.

"General Scott," he said, "I am delighted with your reply to my kinsman! Please take a glass of wine with me."

Thus the incident passed off pleasantly and was soon forgotten.

Scott returned home in the summer of 1816 and resumed his duties with the army. He had not been back long before he married Miss Maria Mayo, the daughter of John Mayo, Esquire, of Richmond, Va. Scott's popularity was very great. Wherever he went he was received at dinners and entertainments of a semipublic character. Congress, through President Monroe, presented him with a gold medal, and of this medal there is a strange story told, which proves

the old adage about honor among thieves. The medal was deposited for safekeeping in the City Bank of New York. While it was there two thieves breaking in at night stole from the institution $260,000. The medal was lying in a trunk filled with gold. All the gold was stolen, but the medal, marked with the owner's name, though taken out of its case, was left. Both of the thieves were captured, and a few years later, when they had served out their sentences in the State prison, Scott was traveling in a Hudson River steamer, and, between New York and Albany, was robbed of his purse containing $140 by pickpockets who did not know him. The principal thief who had been concerned in the bank robbery, hearing of his loss, bestirred himself among the fraternity, threatening to have the pickpockets sent to the State prison if the money was not returned. He told them in plain words that when he was in the City Bank he had seen the medal, but he was not such a villain as to rob a gallant soldier. In a few days the money was returned to General Scott by the high constable with the report that he had received it from a third party. To show that he did not himself pocket the money, the constable was required to produce Scott's written receipt for its return.

A slight misunderstanding had taken place between General Andrew Jackson and Scott soon after the latter's return. It was unfortunate that just at this time it should have happened, for the country needed its illustrious men, and it was desirous that they work in sympathy with one another. At one time a duel between Scott and Jackson was threatened, but luckily it did not take place, and years after a reconciliation was effected. The young general was employed in departmental work and the labors incident to the position until 1832, when again he was ordered to active service. At the head of something under a thousand men he started west to finish the Black Hawk Indian war that had been dragging on for some months. A most dreadful experience was his.

Asiatic cholera broke out among his soldiers while they were on a boat on the lake headed for Chicago. Although it had only appeared a few days before he landed, 48 privates and 4 officers had died and over 80 were on the sick-list.

The inhabitants fled from the troops. A panic seized everybody on

the lake shore, and, to add to the distress, General Atkinson sent on word for Scott to hurry up his reen-forcements. At once he sent forward all of his men who were able to march. But the plague went with them; they died like sheep along the road! Inside of ten days, out of the nine hundred and fifty, only four hundred remained alive. Scott himself suffered extremely from what the doctors thought were the preliminaries of the disease, and was forced to stay behind in Chicago. But he did not take to his bed; instead he spent his time among the sick, assisting the doctors and talking with and encouraging the sufferers. At last, though considerably weakened, he hastened on to overtake his forces. He was shocked and broken-hearted at the scenes he found in the wake of his little army. Dying men and newly made graves marked its track.

When at last, with about 200 of his men who were capable of fighting, he joined General Atkinson, the latter had already fought a decisive fight near Prairie du Chien at Bad Axe, where the power of the Black Hawks was destroyed.

The regulars were established at the camp at Rock Island, where again the awful cholera broke out, and again Scott, although he could with ease have avoided it, took up the duty of assistant surgeon and chaplain. At last the epidemic was stamped out, or, better, wore itself away, for little was understood about the proper treatment of such diseases. Antiseptics or disinfectants were unknown.

Scott now assisted in arranging the treaties with the Indian tribes of the Sacs, Foxes, and Winnebagoes. He seemed to have the same gift of inspiring perfect confidence among the savages as he had among his own troops, and the chiefs trusted to his word and listened to his sound advice and counsel.

As soon as he had returned, General Jackson despatched him to South Carolina to take command of affairs there, for the early disloyalty of the State was made evident, and the Disunionists, or Nullifiers, had already begun to show their power. But under Scott's cool and able management the defenses and the military positions were occupied, and without bloodshed the trouble was smoothed over.

In 1836, at the beginning of the year, Scott was ordered to Florida to attempt to end the Seminole war, which the great chief Osceola had been waging for years against the settlers. His plans for the campaign were not backed up by the Administration, and, upon his recall, he demanded a court-martial, which exonerated him from blame for the non-success that followed his endeavors.

In 1837 he was ordered to the Canadian frontier again. It looked as if there would be more trouble between England and the United States. There had been open rioting, and privately equipped expeditions had waged a species of guerrilla warfare across the border.

During the winter of 1838 he was kept constantly moving in an effort to put down these disturbances and to act as peacemaker. Frequently he was to be found addressing meetings of citizens and proclaiming that the neutrality of the United States must be preserved at all hazards. On more than one occasion it was only his own personality and unbending attention to duty and his allegiance to his one idea that prevented catastrophe and war.

In the spring of 1839 he superintended the removal of the Cherokee Indians to their Western reservation. Once more it was by his firmness, humanity, generosity, and kindness that he succeeded, without a single outbreak, in removing 15,000 Indians from the hunting-grounds of the forefathers. While on his way out West he was recalled by an urgent message that demanded again his presence on the Canadian frontier. Hostilities were threatened between Maine and New Brunswick. It was hard work for Scott to prevent the inhabitants of both old colonies, so long enemies, from springing at each other's throats; but he restored order, and the dispute was at length settled by the now famous Ashburton treaty. In the preliminary negotiations Scott won for himself the name of the "Pacificator."

On the death of General Macomb, in 1841, General Scott found himself in command of the entire army of the United States. It was a time of peace, so far as conflicts with foreign nations were concerned; but there were great political rivalries and much agitation. Party feeling ran high; blind partizanship took the place of national service, and to recount all of the difficulties and

intrigues that led up to the greatest chapter of our hero's life would take more space than could be afforded in a book that deals only with his active life. But in 1846, almost without preparation, and certainly without warning to the people at large, America found herself plunged into a war with Mexico, and this brings into the telling probably the most remarkable single campaign of all of our national history.

CHAPTER IX

THE CAPTURE OF VERA CRUZ

General Taylor, with an army of about 4,000 men, was down on the bank of the Rio Grande in the latter part of March, 1846. Hostilities had commenced, and border warfare had been going on for some time, but there had been no invasion of Mexico by any large force of men. But soon General Taylor's guns commanded Matamoras. The advance of and the wonderful victories of the little American army under him caused a furor throughout the country. Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, and Monterey will ever be carried upon the flags of the regiments that took part in these memorable battles. Then Buena Vista followed. Taylor's name was acclaimed everywhere; his dashing bravery and reckless spirit won for him hosts of devoted followers. And Taylor had political aspirations, it was well known. President Polk was not only jealous but timorous. He did not like to have a rival looming upon the political horizon.

Scott, who perhaps was the strongest man in the country so far as popularity went among military men, was ambitious, and this the President knew well. By this time our hero was no longer young, or even middle-aged. He had arrived at those years when, ripe with honors, men are generally accustomed to see younger men step by them to the front, and contentedly to watch them go, with words of sage counsel and encouragement.

Not so with Scott. Beneath that broad bosom beat a young man's heart; his eye was clear and far-seeing. His huge frame, although grown heavy, was not unwieldy, and he yet merited the description of him given by a great Englishman who had met him when in London, and who said he looked "like a walking cathedral." His intense self-reliance had not withered with the years that had passed over his head. He perhaps had grown more self-assertive, and as he knew that very soon he would have to put by the sword and give up the saddle, his ambition still prompted him, while he could make use of the faculties with which nature had endowed him, to give them active employment. Again and again he had requested that the President should give him some, field command.

He had volunteered advice and had offered suggestion, but his services apparently were not required, and his suggestions were ignored.

Fretting at his enforced idleness, he tried to persuade President Polk that unless some larger demonstration and more forceful handling of the war took place, disaster was sure to follow. Rumors of the outlawry existing along the Mexican border, and of the behavior of some of the irregular forces attached to General Taylor's army, and even of the conduct of some of his troops and officers, began to circulate. His little army had fought bravely, it is true, but their leader, although an intrepid man, had not the gift or the power of instilling or exacting strict discipline. There had been much unnecessary bloodshed and great pillaging and destruction of property.

And now the news came that the fighting force, depleted by the losses in their successive victories, and hardly sustained by the inadequate system of supply, was in danger of being cut off and surrounded by Mexican forces. Some action was necessary, but a stronger reason than all this was soon brought to bear upon the President. Taylor's popularity still grew; he was becoming a dangerous rival, and the people were clamoring that he should not be neglected. So Scott was sent for and was given full command of the new expedition that was to sail for the Gulf, there to undertake the invasion of the country and the attempted investment of the Mexican capital.

On the 30th of November Scott started overland for New Orleans. Vera Cruz, that had been spoken of as the Gibraltar of Mexico, was to be the object of his first attack. President Polk had informed him, prior to his departure, that he placed the greatest dependence upon him, that he relied on his genius and energy, and that he was to have supreme command. Scott declared everywhere to his friends that the President had acted nobly, and yet when the general was but a few miles away from Washington Polk had set afoot a plan to have a lieutenant-general appointed who would actually be at the head of all military affairs, and under whose direction his subordinates would have to act.

When Scott arrived at New Orleans this fact and the existence of the

plot was divulged to him; he was shown a letter from Senator Barrow that told of the President's plans in detail. Scott could hardly believe it possible; he could not credit the President with such behavior, and it was not until later, when he had reached the Rio Grande, that he became convinced against his will. As soon as he had arrived at Tampico and joined the army he set at work to right the abuses which he found to be, alas, too many. Slackness of discipline and acts of violence were now to be punished in the severest manner. Justice was to be meted out to offenders, and kindness, so much as was compatible with warfare, to the conquered foe. It was a policy that, carried out to the letter, bore good fruit.

Congress, that was in the main patriotic, although in a measure half-hearted in regard to the war, had before it a bill for the increase of the army, but it was now delayed by the schemes of the political party that sought for its own ends to secure the appointment of a lieutenant-general, and therefore the bill was delayed at Washington. However, at the front delay was impossible; Scott knew that the dreaded scourge of yellow fever, the plague of the low coast country, would make its appearance at Vera Cruz in the early spring, and that if his army was detained, disease more deadly than bullets, more sweeping than the bayonets of any force the foe could muster, would crumple and destroy his army, and spell defeat and ruin. He must effect a lodgment on the high and healthy table-lands, or wait another year.

Another year, and what might happen? No one could tell. The whole campaign that had begun so brilliantly might dwindle to defeat and abandonment, disgrace instead of glory would settle on the American flag, the prestige so hardly gained would be lost forever, and the loss would be incalculable, for the future morale of the army depended upon its continuance of its brilliant and honorable record; its popularity also, for a people and a republic especially have no sympathy with unsuccess. He must act at once, and on his own responsibility. The total numbers of the fighting men at his disposal were under 24,000. The advantages gained by Taylor must not be forgotten or abandoned. Scott feared also that the ships that were waiting to transport his troops might be withdrawn.

So, on the 9th of March, with 12,000 men that he had assembled on the island of Lobos, 130 miles from Vera Cruz, he set sail, leaving behind him 10,000 men to support and to hold the country under Taylor.

A very careful reconnoissance and survey had been made of Vera Cruz and its surroundings, and a spot had been selected west of the island of Sacrificios for the landing. As the steamer *Massachusetts* passed through the fleet, Scott, standing on the quarter-deck, replied to the salutes and to the cheers. The yards were manned, bugles rang merrily, and the regimental band struck up the popular and patriotic melodies. It was a brilliant day. There was just enough breeze to fill all sails, and as the *Massachusetts* forged away to the head of the line, the general's heart was filled with encouragement and hope, and not only that; he felt a great and wide trust in the men who were to follow him. Yet he knew that he was starting out with his bridges burning behind him —that one false step, one mistake, would mean his instant recall, the wreck of his schemes and plans, and the sinking forever of his sun upon the evening of his active life, never to rise again. These feelings almost overcame him, and well he knew that his position was understood, for just as every anchor was weighed and the fleet in full sail he turned to the group of officers who were standing near him on the *Massachusetts*' deck.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I am entering upon this campaign with a halter around my neck. The end of it is at Washington, and they are ruthless executioners; success is absolutely necessary, and I expect you, my young friends, to get this halter off for me." No one replied. His chief of staff stepped forward and grasped him by the hand. But it was as if a compact had been made by all —an understanding that, spreading through the rank and file, everywhere, meant devotion to the one idea. They would carry the flag forward as long as there was left a man to lift it from the ground if ever for an instant it might fall.

It was fully expected that there would be a determined resistance to the landing of the American troops. The approach of the fleet was so long heralded and there had been so much time for preparation, owing to the numerous delays, that it seemed only sensible to

expect that the lodgment of the troops upon the shore would only take place with great difficulty and much loss of men. Therefore, as soon as the ships had reached their destined positions, five gunboats and two steamers were ordered to proceed in toward the beach, and, there coming to anchor, they were expected to command the point of debarkation with their broadsides.

Slowly and anxiously watched from the transports and frigates, they went in. Not a shot was fired, and they took their allotted places unmolested. In the meantime, from all the vessels, the large surf-boats that were necessary to effect a safe landing through the rolling sea were lowered away; and in the 67 boats 5,500 men were crowded, loading them to the gunwales. It was like the day of sailing—bright and beautiful. The brilliant uniforms and the polished arms, the fluttering flags, under the bright morning sun, made a wondrous show. War was more of a pageant, more of a spectacular exhibition, in those days, when foemen fought within full view of one another, and the sight of an enemy's well-dressed and serried ranks was a telling factor. Invisibility was not desired especially—the mere sight of man was used to lessen the courage of an adversary.

As the boats shoved out from the shelter of the ships, the bands began playing, and, under the crash of drum and cymbal and the blare of trumpets, the rowers gave way and bent their backs to the long sweeps. Within plain sight rose the roofs and domes and spires of Vera Cruz. They passed the line of the waiting guard-ships, hailed by cheers, and it became a race for the shore. The undulating line of boats lifted and sank in the heavy swell. Soon they were in the midst of the tumbling smother where the waters broke.

Scott, watching from the deck of the flagship, at last saw some of the men spring out, almost shoulder deep, into the surf, and struggle up the beach. Leading them all was a color sergeant, carrying the Stars and Stripes. With a dozen men at his heels he rushed across the strip of sand, and, reaching a high sand dune, planted there the flagstaff and threw the colors, rippling, out to the breeze. Cheer after cheer rolled back from the shore and was echoed frotn the ships. Without a shot being fired a landing had been effected. The second and third divisions followed, and by ten

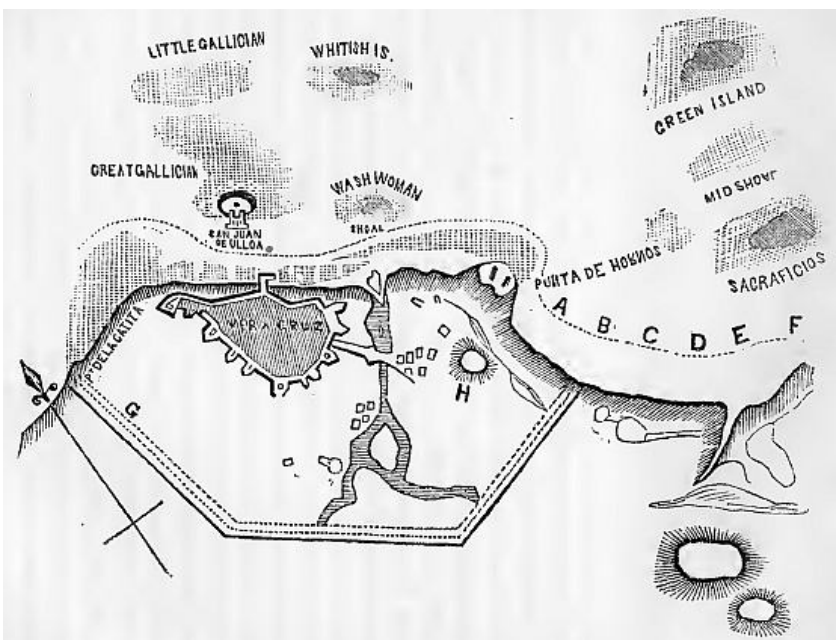
o'clock the 12,000 men were marching to the positions that had been assigned them under the brilliant, star-sprinkled sky.

But now the fortresses of the city had awakened. Before daylight the cannon were roaring, and the shells, leaving their track of fire behind them, were shrieking out toward the moving forces of the Americans, that did not deign yet to reply, but marched on to the exact spots that they had been told to occupy.

By the evening of the next day the city was entirely surrounded, and the troops rested, after digging trenches. A fierce norther, or heavy gale, setting in, it was found necessary to delay operations, as it was impossible to land any of the heavy ordnance, and the ships were with difficulty prevented from dragging their anchors and being forced to put out to sea. At the end of a week, however, all was in readiness, and on the 22d a summons was sent by Scott to Morales, the governor of the fort, ordering him to surrender, and, at the same time, offering safeguard for the removal of the women and children and the foreign consuls and officers with their families. For two days he waited, but on the 24th a reply came rejecting all terms, and informing him that no one would leave the city under any pretense, and that the governor intended to defend it with his last gasp. Immediately upon the receipt of this reply, Scott opened fire, but, reserving his full strength, it was not until the evening of the 25th that all his guns were in action. For five miles the enfilading and surrounding batteries poured in an awful cannonade. Buildings crumbled beneath the weight of the solid shot, spires and domes crushed and fell, and the streets were filled with whirring splinters, hurtling masonry, and exploding shells.

The ships had opened also, and their well-timed broadsides, in regular succession, roared and reverberated from hill to hill. Even at night the firing was kept up, and, the Mexicans replying, the heavens were crossed and recrossed by the network of red shell tracks. The morning of the 26th dawned and showed great gaps in the wall, while from the city rose groans and cries. Alas, it had been a dreadful time for the inhabitants! In many cases families had been crushed under the tumbling roofs and crumbling houses. A white flag soon appeared. The governor asked for an armistice; he had changed his first intention. The consuls of the foreign powers

requested a safeguard for themselves, and, through them, the governor implored that the women and children might now be taken to places of safety; but war is war, and any weapon is a weapon when it comes to hand. Scott replied that the governor had decided already and must abide by the consequence. The responsibility would now be his, and with this message the bearer of the white flag returned. Immediately the Mexican gunners could be seen forming at their pieces, and the bugles raised their thrilling notes back of the city's ramparts, but there were the wide gaps made by the heavy, solid shot, tempting the daring of the young officers, urging them to deeds of valor. A delegation headed by a colonel of one of the infantry regiments approached Scott. A request was made of him to allow a body formed of volunteers to storm the fortress, and carry the castle of San Juan d'Ulloa, the citadel that towered above them all.



PLAN OF VERA CRUZ AND SAN JUAN DE ULLOA

REFERENCES.

A and C. The positions of the steamers Spitfire and Vixen.

G. American line of intrenchments, established March 13th--extending from Point de la Catita to a point opposite B.

B, D, E, and F. The positions of the gunboats.
H. A Mexican redoubt captured by our forces.
The sloop of war John Adams was anchored on the south side of the Sacrificios, opposite F.
(John Frost, *Pictorial History of Mexico and the Mexican War*, Philadelphia: Charles Desilver, 1862, 472)

Scott looked calmly at the colonel and at the anxious group of young men who awaited the result of the inquiry.

"How many men do you suppose it would cost to do it?" he asked.

"Possibly 2,000 or 2,500," the officer replied, making a swift mental calculation. "It would depend upon circumstance."

Scott smiled at him and then grew stern.

"But I can take it with much less sacrifice," he said at last.

"Yes, general," replied the fiery colonel, "but the army will win no glory and the officers will have no opportunities to distinguish themselves."

Scott stepped out before the group so that his words could be heard by all, and raising his voice, he replied imperiously: "Remember, gentlemen, that a commander who deliberately sacrifices one life more than is necessary to secure a victory is guilty of murder. Back to your posts, sirs!"

The forts had now begun to open up again. Scott mounted his huge horse—for it required a remarkably strong and able beast to carry him—and rode down the line of battle. As he approached an angle of the earthwork where the shot was flying thickest, he noticed some gunners and bombardiers climb up in full sight to see the effect of their own fire.

"Down, men," he said, "down ! Don't expose yourselves."

From where he sat he motioned to them fiercely with his arm. A private standing near by saluted him.

"But, general," he said, "you are exposed."

Scott almost laughed at the fellow's boldness.

"Oh," he replied, "generals nowadays can be made out of anybody, but good men are hard to get!"

With that he rode on.

Before long—on the afternoon of the 27th—a second flag of truce was sent out, and Governor Morales surrendered the city and the castle; the garrisons marched out, laying down their arms, and being paroled as prisoners of war, were allowed to depart to their homes. The loss to the American side was very small, including killed and wounded, 64 officers and men. The Mexicans' loss was somewhat greater, but it was unfortunate there were so many non-combatants who met their death.

The proceeds of the surrender—the fruits of victory—were 5,000 prisoners, nearly 10,000 stands of arms, 400 pieces of ordnance, and large stores of ammunition. The Gibraltar of Mexico had fallen in twenty days from the time that Scott had assumed the active campaign.

CHAPTER X

CERRO GORDO

It was not until the 12th of April that General Scott was able to leave Vera Cruz. The difficulty in getting started arose from the lack of draft animals—horses and mules —and the small number of wagons supplied by the Government. A strange incident took place here that is not generally mentioned in the histories of the campaign, but it shows how Scott, although self-reliant and almost egotistical at times, could adapt himself to circumstances, and how unerringly he formed his judgment of men and of affairs.

It was absolutely necessary to get the army out of the low plain on to the high and healthy table-land that lay to the westward, back of the mountains at an altitude of about 5,000 to 6,000 feet. Nothing but the strong northerly gales that had prevailed for almost a fortnight had prevented the yellow-fever from appearing in the city. It was imperative that the army should move. It was necessary, of course, to leave a garrison behind at Vera Cruz, and Scott, in counting up his forces, found that he had as an army of invasion, when this force was deducted, scarcely 8,000 men. Think of it! Eight thousand men to invade a country well prepared and warlike! Eight thousand men to enter the almost unknown mountain passes, forced to cut themselves off from their supplies and to depend upon the country! Between them and the capital city lay, for all they knew, a score of battle-fields. Accurate information they had of at least six strong positions where the enemy could gather a force three times their own. It was go forward or turn back. There was no turn back in Scott's make-up. The fires of youth still burned in his heart. He may have lost some of the impulsiveness, but all of the energy, all of the ambition, remained. But how could he move without animals to drag his guns and transport wagons? He was in a quandary. It took in those days months almost to communicate with Washington. Something must be done. There happened to be an American contractor in Vera Cruz who had lived for a long time in Mexico. He knew the people and spoke the language; and he also knew that not many miles away in the country were thousands of mules and horses, and that if the American army advanced the

people would probably drive their live-stock back into the mountains, hiding them away in inaccessible places. There was also good reason to suppose that the Mexican military authorities would soon be seizing all the animals they could for their own use, and would kill those they could not use, in order to prevent their falling into the hands of the Americans. Scott intended to carry out his plans of just treatment of the inhabitants respecting persons and property, and attempting to reconcile the landowners and dwellers in the country through which his army had to pass. But up to this time there had been little opportunity outside of the walls of Vera Cruz for convincing the people of his intentions.

The American contractor had met the general, and knowing of the difficulties, suggested a plan; it was a bold and startling one. Nothing more nor less than that Scott, on his own authority, should appoint him the contractor, the financial agent of the United States Government, with full power, and that he should override all red tape and departmental delays, and place in his hands as much ready money as he had at his command. Now, in all the paymasters' departments, and at Scott's disposal, there was less than $60,000 in hard cash. Of course he could have signed due-bills upon the American Government, but that would mean little to the half-educated and naturally suspicious Mexicans. Their confidence must be won. Scott drew upon the pay departments and borrowed what money he could in a legitimate way in the city of Vera Cruz. Putting $8,000 in gold into four bags, the contractor, accompanied by two or three friendly Mexicans, started out on horseback on the road to Jalapa. At every wayside inn he scattered money in all directions—not a lazy, idling peon but received a gold piece; children scrambled for handfuls of them, and the news of him went on ahead. Not until he was some distance from Vera Cruz did he make a single purchase, and then he bought a half-score of fine mules and horses at their owners' prices, stating that he would return again in three or four days and pay in gold more money for draft animals than they had ever brought before in the memory of the oldest inhabitant.

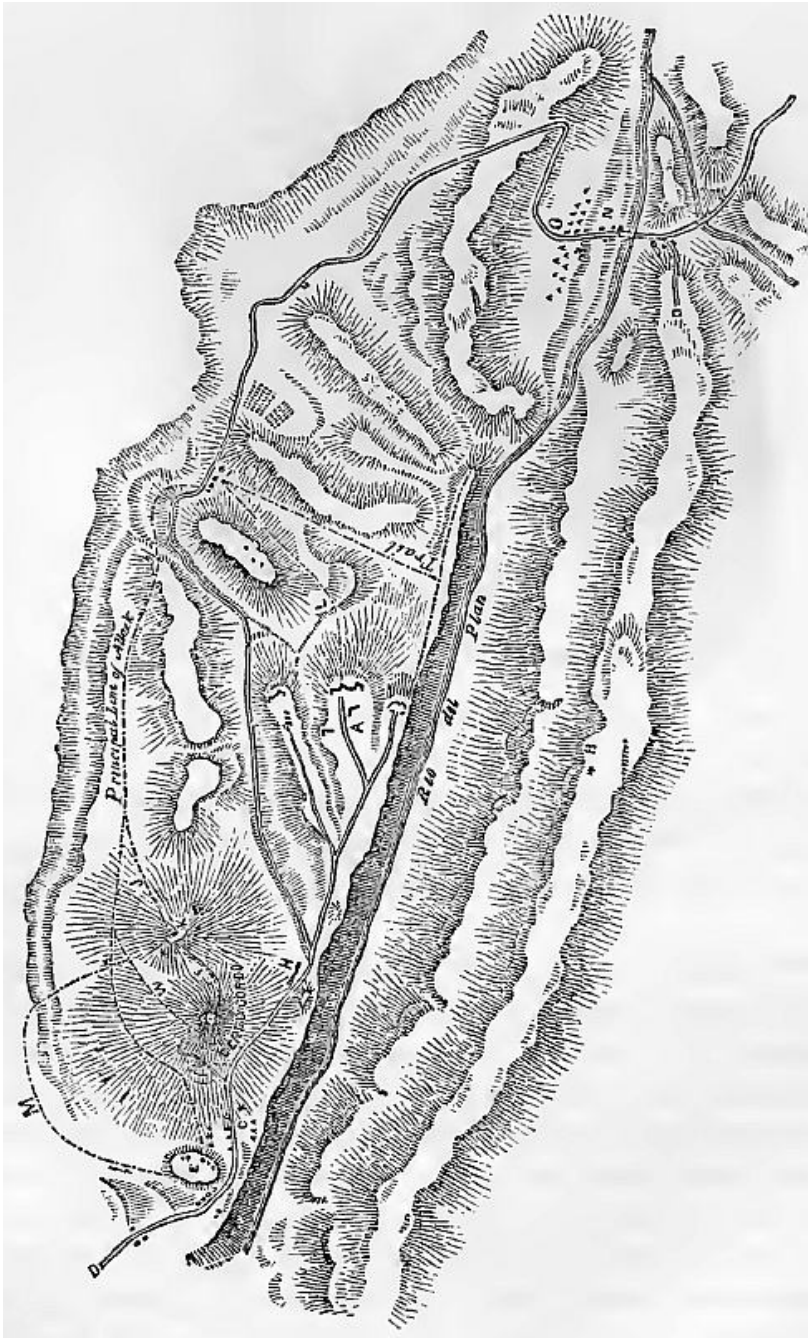
His second expedition was a repetition of his first, only he progressed farther into the country. He treated everybody who would drink or eat with him, and by this time the news of the

invader's lavishness had spread broadcast. Small farmers and peons with animals to sell brought them to the places that he had appointed, and there received cash on the nail for their mules and horses. Scott was forced to trust this man implicity, and if the contractor had not been honest, the general's career might have been ruined; but all went well. At the end of a week, bodies of cavalry rode out into the plains in all directions without fear of molestation; the people greeted them as friends, and they drove back with purchased animals into the American camp.

At last, by the 12th of March, enough live stock and horses were secured to warrant moving forward the army, although it was not until the 15th that some of the heavy guns received their complements, and followed in the wake of the cavalry and infantry and light artillery. But even more good had been accomplished than the purchase of the animals meant. The reputation for honest dealing and right purpose of the Americans spread everywhere before them. These people had not come to pillage and to ruin. They paid their way. Property was safe. There was no looting, as we call it now, no cruel pillaging, or rapine. The policy bore great fruit.

Three days after leaving Vera Cruz, Scott reached the base of the mountains, and before him towered the fortress and entrenched position of Cerro Gordo — a position almost impregnable at first sight, and yet one that must be taken before his army could move to the table-lands beyond. The Mexicans had labored long to strengthen this wonderful position. Nature herself had done much in that direction. A deep river crossed by a single bridge and only fordable in one or two places skirted the foot of the heights. Beyond it, tier upon tier, rose the successive lines of fortifications, bristling with guns, the trenches filled with infantry supplied with ammunition for a month's investment. The road that the army would have to take wound along the side of the mountain, through deep and narrow gorges, almost to the very top where it debouched out upon the plain; but there, crowning the eminence, was the strongest fort of all—a Spanish-built castle and a tower of stone. Heavy artillery filled every embrasure, bastion and escarpment were lined with guns. They commanded all of the defenses below, every one of which would have to be carried in succession before the top could be reached. Once fallen, however, and in the

American possession, the broad traveled road lay straight for the city of Mexico.



PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF CERRO GORDO

A. 17 Guns Mexican Battery.
B. United States Howitzer.
C. Mexican Camp.
D. Road to Jalapa.
E. Five Guns.
F. Harney's Storming Party.
H. Six Guns Battery.
J. Twigg's 17 Guns Battery.
K. United States Battery.
L. General Pillow's Brigade.
M. Route of Shield's Brigade.
N. Plan del Rio.
O. American Camp.
(John Frost, *Pictorial History of Mexico and the Mexican War*, Philadelphia: Charles Desilver, 1862, 482)

General [David E.] Twiggs, who had first arrived and had reconnoitered the position, had determined to storm it at once from the front. But General Patterson, joining him with his volunteers, persuaded him to wait for Scott's arrival. As soon as the general came up and looked over the ground, he saw the utter impossibility of a frontal attack. It would be sheer butchery to send men against those heavy batteries. No matter how brave they were, or how boldly they pressed forward, the destruction of his army would result. Even if a last forlorn hope could climb the hill, there would still be the castle and the great stone tower to be reckoned with. Scott noticed, however, that across the river were two hills almost as high as Cerro Gordo, to the left and right. Sending out an armed reconnoissance under charge of two young and able engineers from West Point (Captain Robert E. Lee and Lieutenant Beauregard, soon known to fame), he discovered that it was possible to build a road around the mountain on the opposite side of the. river, and that if the fire of the batteries could be diverted, or their positions partially destroyed, it would be possible for the mounted men and light infantry to turn the entire position and gain the national road at a point back of the Mexican entrenchments.

General David E. Twiggs
(John Frost, *Pictorial History of Mexico and the Mexican War*, Philadelphia: Charles Desilver, 1862, 480)

On the night of the 14th the work began. Hidden from sight of the Mexicans, for three days and nights the soldiers toiled, and, wonderful to relate, the intention was not discovered until the 17th, when the batteries opened fire upon the working parties, but by the evening of that day the road was completed, and now it was necessary to finish the other part of the plan. The eager General Twiggs was given an order that well suited his ambitious spirit. It was to storm the second hill. This was but slightly lower than the crest of Cerro Gordo, and was held by a small detachment of the enemy in a round fort at the top.

Just before sunset Twiggs crossed the stream, and before the Mexicans were aware of his intention, his men swarmed up the heights and overwhelmed the force that bravely attempted to hold it. It was dark before the work was accomplished, but between that time and daylight there was much to be done. An almost impossible task lay before the American troops. Nothing more than lifting up the almost precipitous sides of the mountain, in the pitch darkness, the heavy guns that should give battle to the Mexican batteries. No doubt the enemy believed that the position that Twiggs had gained could not be held. The presence of infantry there did not disturb them in the least, for they knew that they could not hold their position without the aid of artillery, and although the hill commanded all of their lower entrenchments on the slopes, the latter were safe, as they were well out of range of musket-shot. But much was doing in the American camp; a bridge had been built and a heavy 24-pounder and two 24-pound howitzers were taken to the base of the hill. They had to be lifted somehow to the top; almost 900 feet high the steep sides of the mountain towered above them.

It was very dark, for the night was cloudy. A huge fire was built at the foot of the gorge, and its flames lit the rocky sides and showed the toiling men their way at the beginning of their task. Five hundred men were detailed to every gun; ropes and snatch-blocks were rigged about the boulders. A reserve force of 500 men were held in readiness to take the place of their comrades when they should become wearied by the arduous work. Inch by inch and foot by foot the heavy burdens crept up the mountainsides. The men worked silently. The officers spoke in low voices, for the Mexicans must not be advised of their intentions. By four o'clock in the morning the guns were in position. Around each was built a semicircle of huge stones, and a long stone wall flanking them on the western side was hastily thrown up, behind which the supporting infantry took their positions. Not a man in the American camp slept that night. When dawn came, and the sun began to show above the low, eastern horizon it was a wondrous sight! The Mexican bugles rang clear and loud, and the troops on the slopes of the hill at Cerro Gordo went to their positions. Little did they know that looking down upon them from a point of vantage, hundreds of feet above, their enemies' guns were waiting. The bodies of infantry and the brilliantly uniformed cavalry regiments moved out, and

suddenly, from out of the sky almost, down poured upon them the fire of shot and shell. The lower batteries were almost helpless, but the fort of Cerro Gordo and the castle, almost 200 feet higher than the hill the Americans held, concentrated its fire on the little battery that for a long time disdained to make reply, keeping up a constant discharge upon the dismayed forces beneath them in the valley.

Along the sides of the gorge small bodies of the troops crept forward on either side, and soon the rattle of musketry was added to the din of the great guns. The tops of the hills smoked like volcanoes. The iron and leaden hail swept down the slopes.

And now the American troops in the wide, green plain below could be seen moving forward. They had crossed the river, and the mounted forces at full gallop charged up the road the engineers had built so skilfully. Harney's forces turned to the left, and swept over the first lines of Mexican entrenchments. Pillow, who was detailed to make a frontal attack on the lower batteries, was for an instant repulsed, but the Second, Seventh, and Third Infantry, with the Rifles, backed by the First and Fourth Artillery, had now got in the flank and rear of the lower protecting batteries, and were scrambling over the naked rocks toward the crest of the hill. Higher and higher they climbed, Harney on foot leading them. The first rank was met with a murderous volley, but the second rank swept to them, and, with the remnant of the first, they poured over the walls of the citadel from all directions. They charged over guns and gunners with a wild, shrill cheer that reached their comrades on the hill beyond. Harney, who in his eagerness had pressed on too fast, mounted a corner of the parapet alone. A dozen rifles were fired at him. His clothing and hat were pierced, but he was unharmed. The gallant Shields was pressing on to his assistance, shouting, although his voice was lost amid the deafening roar, "We are coming, we are coming!" when he was pierced by a ball through the lungs.

Harney turned, and, as if he was at the head of a host of followers, instead of a mere handful, shouted out orders to his fancied battalions, waving his sword, and then followed by not more than twenty brave spirits, he leaped down inside the Mexican entrenchments.

Scott, who had pressed along the road, came upon an officer who was still moving forward, holding one badly shattered arm with the other, his sword hitched under his elbow. Scott recognized Captain Patten, a young West Pointer.

"Are you badly hurt, sir?" Scott inquired.

The young officer did not reply to the question, but letting go his wounded arm, he pointed with the sound one:

"Look, general," he cried, "look! Our men are in the entrenchments."

Scott glanced up and was just in time to see the blue uniforms sweep like a hurricane over the hill crest. The day was won. In a few minutes after that last final charge the firing had drifted away to a few spattering shots among the hills and out on the Western plains.

Scott pressed his horse forward and gained the crest where the panting soldiers stood, slowly forming themselves into their lines again.

The hill was strewn with dead and wounded. The latter raised themselves half upright as he passed and cheered him, but when he reached the top and found himself among his brave battalions, emotion almost overcame him. He lifted his heavy hat, and sweeping his arm about him, with a wide gesture he seemed to take every man in at a glance.

"Soldiers," he cried, "I could take every one of you to my bosom!"

And then he saw standing a little way apart a group of young West Pointers, some scarcely more than boys, who had led their veteran regiments over the rough way up the hill. The tears sprang to his eyes, his voice choked, words failed him. He could think of nothing. Closing his fist, he shook it at the young men, lovingly, half playfully.

"Oh, you young rascals, you!" he said. And fearing to say more, he touched his horse with his spurs and rode out from the shadow of the ramparts to the plain beyond.

Far away rolled a great cloud of dust, occasional shots sounded here and there. The American dragoons were sweeping after the retreating Mexican cavalry, who, although in greater numbers, were in full retreat upon Jalapa.

With tired sword-arms and blades dripping red, they turned back to join their cheering comrades on the field of Cerro Gordo.

The defenders of the Mexican position had numbered not less than 15,000. Scott found that he had taken 3,000 prisoners, small arms to the number of 8,000, and more pieces of artillery by double the number than he possessed in his whole army. His losses, taking into account the value of the position gained, were small, the casualties being about 250, the enemy's exceeding this by more than a hundred.

Scott stated that it would take a brigade and a half of mules to transport the artillery captured in this single engagement. Without an hour's delay he prepared to press on along the national road to the city of Jalapa, whose towers and houses were in plain sight. Quietly the American army entered without opposition on the day following. There for some weeks they were to rest.

CHAPTER XI

IN SIGHT OF MEXICO

While the main army waited at Jalapa, General Scott threw forward Worth's division, and, taking advantage of the consternation and panic that had seized the Mexican ranks, a small body of Americans took the formidable castle and fort of Perope, and followed this by entering the big city of Puebla, that surrendered without firing a gun.

Now, delays were absolutely necessary, and something in the form of discomfiture awaited the victorious general. The 4,000 volunteers who had accompanied him and who had done good fighting were very close to the time of the expiration of their enlistment; the great majority of them intended to claim the privileges under which they had entered the service, and demanded that they should be returned home to the United States as soon as they had received their discharge. They all, however, declared that they would remain until the very last day of their term of service. But, as this would send them back to the coast at the time that yellow fever would most likely be raging, Scott determined to let them go at once, and they were sent back. For nearly a month the troops waited wearily for their supplies. But at length, at the end of May, Scott went forward with the reserve and joined General Worth at Puebla, where he had entered on the 15th.

A strong garrison was left behind under General Childs at Jalapa, in order to keep the lines of communication open with Vera Cruz, and this, of course, depleted still further the worn and scanty ranks. Now gathered at his last stopping place he could muster scarcely 5,000 effective men.

What did he write of this peculiarly trying time? No complaints, although he was galled by the inaction of Congress and a lack of supplies and the delay of reenforcements. But never for a minute did Scott's dauntless spirit leave him. "The corps," he writes, "were daily put through their maneuvers and evolutions. We were also kept on the alert by an army, sometimes of superior numbers, hovering about us, and often assuming a menacing attitude, but

always ready for flight the moment they saw we were under arms. On these occasions it was painful to restrain the ardor of the troops, but I steadily held to the policy of not to wear out patience and sole leather by running in the pursuit of small game. I played for big stakes. Keeping the army massed and the mind fixed upon the capital, I meant to content myself with beating whatever force might stand in the way of that conquest."

This is only quoted in order to show his indomitable spirit, but he knew he was doing more. It is a great commander who can so restrain his troops when victorious in a strange country as to win for them the trust, the admiration, and even the affection of an enemy.

From Jalapa Scott had issued a proclamation, addressed to the Mexican people at large, appealing to the bishops and priests and the town functionaries of the places through which the army would have to pass, showing certificates from those places that they had already entered, confirming the declaration that the rights of property and the persons of individuals had everywhere been respected.

The people eagerly sought for this proclamation, and the rumors of the good conduct of the victors and the fulfillment of the promises went before them. In fact, out of the mouths of their own countrymen the Mexicans were convinced that the invaders were offering them better terms and giving them better treatment than even their own armies.

Scott's martial law was exceedingly strict. Transgressions of general orders were punished instantly and severely, and, although some restless spirits rebelled at what they termed "unnecessary severity," the good conduct of the troops bore out the truth of the general's policy.

In regard to the proclamation which had been issued, General Worth, in a letter that he wrote from Puebla, made the following statement:

"It takes admirably, and has accomplished more than all the blows from Palo Alto to Cerro Gordo."

To say that people were astonished at the small size of the American army hardly expresses the situation. In the 4,000 or 5,000 orderly and well-behaved men that marched into the city, the Mexicans thought they perceived but the vanguard of the army that was to follow. When they became convinced that this was all the force that Scott possessed, they did not think it possible that they could have accomplished such tremendous results and overcome so many difficulties.

It was a remarkable situation, indeed.

Here, nearly 300 miles from its base, in the midst of a hostile country, surrounded by an enemy, Scott remained unmolested for two months. Although outwardly calm, he must naturally have felt great anxiety, for he was rather uncertain as to how matters stood at Washington. Sickness also had broken out, as it always will when large bodies of men remain too long in one spot, and during this space of time—fifty-three days—700 perished from disease. Also evidence came at last that the Government was sick of the war, although so far it had been nothing but a series of brilliant victories for the American arms. A Mr. Trist, who had been appointed commissioner, arrived in Mexico, armed with credentials and given plenipotentiary powers.

Scott did not want to be a party to prolonged and futile negotiations. The best way to insure peace, in his mind, was to finish the work that he already had begun and press on to the capital. He eagerly prayed for the arrival of the reenforcements, and at length they came. The first to put in an appearance was Colonel Mackintosh's regiment escorting a train of 132 wagons. Five days after his arrival General Cadwallader appeared with 600 men. Within ten days General Pillow and General Pierce appeared with their commands, numbering together 3,500 infantry.

In a short time Scott found that he could count upon between 10,000 and 11,000. There was one thing that he needed, and it was quite impossible to get. The money chests were empty. Pay-day had long been deferred, and it would probably have to be postponed again. But inaction breeds more discontent and grumbling than hardship. It is only busy men who are happy, and of no class is this truer than of soldiers and sailors. Scott wished to press ahead. The

weather was fine, and, although it was midsummer, the altitude of the high plains made the air invigorating and bracing.

On the 7th of July the army moved, Harney's brigade of cavalry leading, followed by Twiggs's division. All the bands were out, and the inhabitants of Puebla, in their gala attire, watched the conquerors leave. The route still led upward to higher ground, and, as there was no immediate resistance to his onward march, the general had time to do some thinking.

It was a marvelous thing he was attempting. Eleven thousand men followed him into an almost unknown country. Before him he knew that there were marshaled somewhere, 30,000 well-drilled and well-equipped troops. He knew that fortresses were ready to receive him and dispute his passing, and that the defenses were well planned and the armaments heavy.

On the third day the army found itself marching through the last dangerous pass. It was called Rio Frio—cold river—and, to Scott's delight and surprise, no attempt was made here to stop him, although preparations were evident, and a plan to do so must have been hastily abandoned. When the army at length had safely threaded the narrow gorge they debouched upon the sloping sides beyond, and there lay the city and the fertile plain! The cathedral towers spired up in the cool, clear air, the red-tiled houses and the white walls gleamed, the waving trees of the plazas made cool, green spots refreshing to look at after the bare slopes of the mountains.

Glimmering in the plain were lakes of clear, blue water, and far beyond outlined against the sky were the snow-clad peaks of the guardian mountain ranges, against whose flanks hung the white billowing line of clouds.

The successive regiments, as this wondrous sight burst upon their view, raised their voices in glad cheers. The cavalry scouts that had been sent out now returned with the news that the enemy was up and watching.

There were three roads by which the city could be approached: the main highway, from Vera Cruz, along which the army had been

traveling; the Acapulco road, which entered the city at right angles; while the Toluca came in from the westward. A careful re-connoissance of the most direct route showed that it must be abandoned, as it was commanded by El Penon, a hill heavily fortified by nature and to which military science had lent its best endeavor to aid in rendering it impregnable. On one side of it rose a sheer cliff up which no human being could crawl, and on each flank was a deep morass connected by a ditch 24 feet wide and 10 feet deep. From the fort to the city ran a causeway 4 miles long, surrounded by water. On its sides were 51 cannon. The causeway was defended by ten 24-pounders at its farther end that would have swept any force attempting to enter the city with hostile intent. General Scott, therefore, determined to reach the Acapulco road, where the defenses were not so strong. But the Lake of Chalco lay almost directly between him and the point that he would like to reach. There was but one thing left for him to do, and that was to turn, retrace his steps, and go around the lake. But this again meant re-crossing a mountain spur that came down to the lake shore.

General Worth, who had commanded the rear division, now took the lead, and after immense labor and with much difficulty, dragged his wagons and artillery over the rough path, and in less than two days succeeded in getting on the road near a place called San Augustine, about ten miles from the city. Here the camp was established, and the army following Worth gathered itself together for the great effort that lay before it.

It would appear from a short survey of the difficulties that Scott had gained but little by changing his original plan—that of advancing to the attack along the Vera Cruz highway. His position, however, was now a little better; the army was not enclosed by marshes and mountains. True, the next point to be taken, San Antonio, a village about three miles ahead of San Augustine, was strongly fortified, and the only approach to it was along a narrow causeway. Near this village was the strongly entrenched position on the hill of Contreras, and next to it the defenses of the bridge of Churubusco, and then beyond, close to the city itself, was the hill of Chapultepec. There were 30,000 Mexicans back of these fortifications; 100 cannon were ready to dispute the passage, and ammunition and supplies were plentiful.

Over all these difficulties the American army of less than 11,000 men must march before they reached the interior lines of defense, and these, indeed, were strong enough to be disheartening to most generals. Scott, however, had learned much of the Mexican character, and he counted not a little on the prestige already attached to the American arms. His men had also had the fact impressed upon them that a single defeat would spell untold disaster; each man felt the responsibility that lay upon himself, and this meant determined fighting.

It was soon rumored that the Mexican position at Contreras was to be carried, and, if this was successfully accomplished, Scott knew that San Antonio was almost at his mercy. The Mexican general Santa Anna considered Contreras impregnable. He had something to learn in the next few days.

CHAPTER XII

CONTRERAS AND CHURUBUSCO

Over the open plain that was cut up by-ditches and interspersed with broken rock and uneven lava-beds Scott built a road. Under the able direction of Captain Robert E. Lee, the engineers and sappers worked all night, and, although under a fire that somewhat hindered their passage, by four o'clock in the afternoon three brigades of infantry, with a small battery of 12- and 6-pounders, pushed their way forward toward the well-built Spanish road that ran from the fortress to the city.

The Mexicans were in consternation. They had deemed the broken country impassable, and now they hurried all the reen-forcements to meet this first advance. On the brave little army poured the concentrated fire of over a score of guns of heavy caliber! Three pieces—two 12-pounders and one 6-pounder—under Captain Magruder and Lieutenant Callender, were rushed on ahead, and for two hours this little battery replied to the furious fire directed at them from the heights.

Scott himself pressed forward and stood beside the guns, but at last the Mexicans, who at first had fired somewhat wildly, got the range exactly. The ground about was ripped and tossed by the hail of iron. The men were sometimes forced to separate and lie down to let the storm sweep over them. At last two of the pieces were dismounted and three-fourths of the men who worked them killed or wounded. It was found necessary to recall the force back into the plain out of the murderous zone of fire. But all the time on the left the troops had been advanced in order to stop the flow of Mexican reenforcements that were pouring into Contreras.

The night of the 19th was the most disheartening that the American army had experienced. They were now separated in three divisions, absolutely out of touch with one another; and Shields, whose forces were farthest advanced, had not received any orders from headquarters for over eight hours. Seven times did Scott send out officers in an endeavor to reach these separated brigades, but not one was successful, for bodies of Mexican cavalry hovered on the

American flanks. But at last brave Captain Lee rode through a Mexican regiment in the darkness and told Scott that his orders had been fulfilled, and the men were waiting to go in at daylight. It was a dreadful night. It rained torrents and the weather was cold. The commissary train was left far in the rear and there were no supplies; soldiers who had reached the road, and who had taken positions in a little orchard to the right, had had no food for ten hours.

Before twelve o'clock the news had spread that there was to be a night attack, and the men stood to their arms. It was better standing than attempting to rest on the ground, at all events, for all about them it was nothing more than a quagmire. Shivering and disconsolate, without blankets or overcoats, the men stood waiting for daylight, and at last it came.

Long before dawn the Mexican guns had opened, all efforts being concentrated to overwhelm the forces on the road. General Smith, whose new position had not yet been discovered, had advanced to the shelter of a slight ridge close under the rising ground, above which towered the batteries. It was not till six that he had all prepared. Then he walked down the line, speaking a word to every company. Standing in line were the Rifles, picked men and sharpshooters, but whose guns were devoid of bayonets. Still it was upon them that the main dependence was placed, and at the word to advance they rushed forward like madmen. A scattering volley from the astonished Mexicans, who had expected no attack from that direction, met them, but it did not turn them back. They clubbed their way over the first line of entrenchment, and falling upon the Mexican ranks, which were now in great disorder, they drove them, as a body of constables would drive a mob, over the farther wall, and followed so close upon their heels that mingled fugitives and pursuers poured over the parapet. The rifle stocks swung in the air— men did not stop to load; and to such terror were the Mexicans now reduced that, like frightened herds of sheep, they ran pell-mell up the ravine. Led by their officers, the Rifles and the infantry took to the higher parts of the hills and poured down a deadly fire upon them. It was dreadful slaughter, alas, for many of the Mexicans had thrown away their arms.

At one place 500, in endeavoring to force their way through a

narrow passage, became jammed and huddled; and 30 Americans rushing ahead of them, led by two young West Pointers, turned them back and took the whole lot prisoners. Think of it! Thirty men capturing over 500, of whom 93 were officers!

The cold night and the hunger seemed to have turned each private into a maddened, fighting beast. The one idea was to close with the enemy and to kill. The mob that endeavored to take the main road to the city was met by Shields's brigade, that now pressed forward. They were cut down or made prisoners. Soon from the top of the captured eminence the bugles were singing the recall.

There was one spectacular event that took place, probably unparalleled in any action. Early in the day a body of lancers in their brilliant uniforms was sent forward by General Sallas in order to stem the torrent and to give the Mexicans time to rally. They came sweeping on. When the charge was sounded, with lances at rest, they spurred on to take the slope from which the Americans were firing. But now from two gorges on each side at least 2,000 frightened fugitives burst out directly in front of them. In an instant they were riding down their own men, who clutched at the horses' bridles in order to save themselves. Scores upon scores were ridden under. Others were pierced by the lances of their countrymen. Some who had kept their arms even shot the lancers from the saddle in order to save themselves. The charge was broken up; it turned and faltered, and now upon the struggling mass the Americans poured their fire. The horsemen caught the fever of the panic. Those on the edges turned and rode at top speed to the city. And now, marvelous to relate, with wild cheers and shouts, men on foot left their sheltered positions and rushed down upon the swaying crowd. Infantry charging artillery in open field! Men slipped from their horses that had become entangled in the ditches, and tried to escape on foot. In twenty minutes that brave and brilliant charge had been converted into a spectacle of panic and disaster. The rabble swept back toward the city, horsemen and infantry mingled, the latter clinging to the stirrup leathers, and even to the tails of the chargers, in their endeavor to get away.

When the bugles sounded the recall, which they did continually, it was hours before the last pursuer had returned, and the regiments

that had become mingled were sifted out and reformed. Around the hill and on the plain were stretched 1,700 killed and wounded. The carnage had been terrific! Small quarter had been given. The earth that had been soaked with rain was now soaked with blood. Eight hundred prisoners, among them no less than four generals, were in the Americans' hands. Only two guns had the Mexicans been able to remove; 22 pieces of ordnance, almost 1,000 pack mules and horses, and vast stores of small arms and ammunition were trophies of this remarkable victory; and again the American loss was small.

Scott at last reached the top of the hill. Mounted on his tremendous horse that stood over seventeen hands high, he looked like a giant of the olden days. Riding on to the position held by the Rifles, who were forming their wearied and battered ranks, many of them with nothing but the bloody barrels of their pieces left, he swept his great cocked hat from his head.

"Brave Rifles, you have been baptized in fire and blood, and come out steel," he cried.

Cheer after cheer went out from all sides. In the old-fashioned way the infantry raised their great shakos on the points of their bayonets. Officers gathered about him. The scene was almost too much. The great spirit of thankfulness moved him so deeply, mingled with the affection that he felt for these brave men about him, that he raised his hand.

"Silence!" he cried, his voice quivering.

"Silence, silence!" shouted the officers, and " Silence " went down the line.

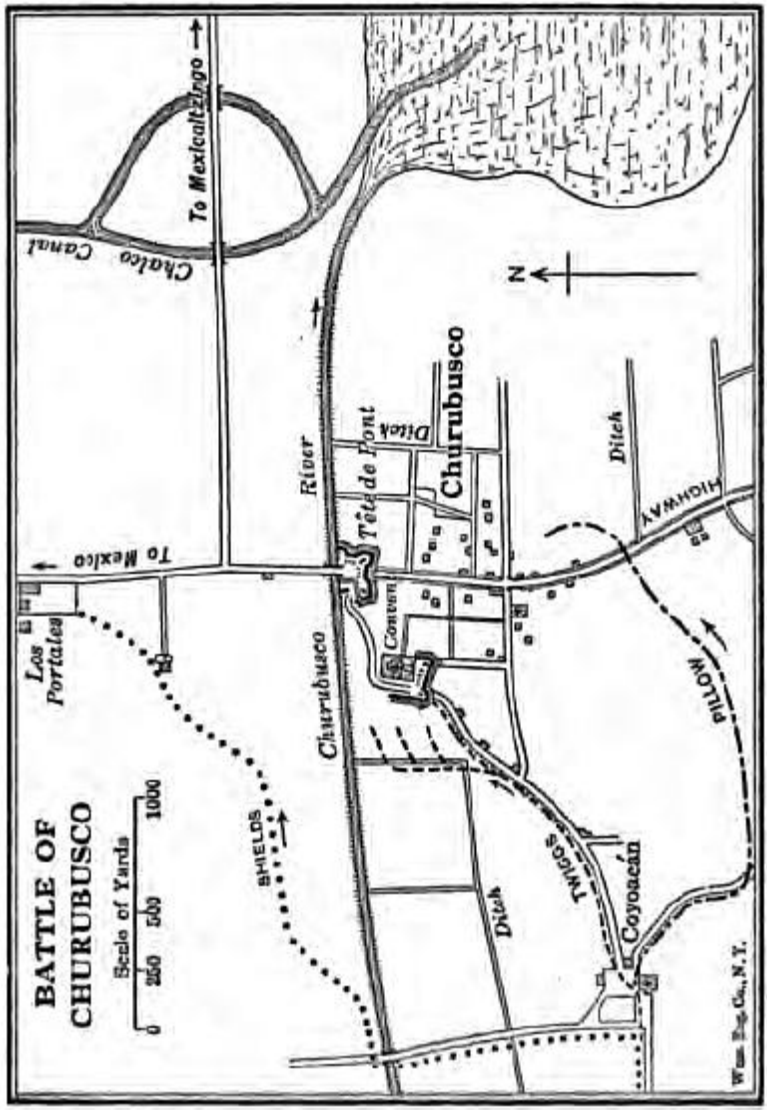
Every word he said could be heard by the 3,000 men on the hilltop.

"Soldiers," he cried, "in the first place great glory to God! in the second place great glory to this gallant little army!"

Said one of the officers in describing this scene: "You should have heard the frantic shouts and hurrahs that followed. It seemed as if the soldiers would break from their ranks and tear him from his horse."

Had there been more fighting before them that instant, they would have charged 10,000 men as they would have charged a company. Not all of his force had been engaged—less than half of it; 3,500 men had crumpled up and demolished an army of over 7,000! Now, however, Scott found himself in a peculiar position. In his rear lay San Antonio, and before it, only four miles away, Churubusco and the bridge; but the Mexicans that held San Antonio did not like their own position; their flanks were already turned, and when Garland with his brigade that had been held in reserve approached they fled. Part of them, however, delayed too long and were cut to pieces by Colonel Clark and the dragoons, who fell suddenly upon them as they left the town. All of the Mexican forces now were rallied upon Churubusco. There was to be more fighting before the sun went down! Santa Anna, the general commanding, rallied some of the fugitives from Contreras, and endeavored to steady them by placing them among his soldiers, but the stories they told of the fierceness of the Americans and the impossibility of resisting them already began to destroy the morale of the Mexican army before the fight took place.

Probably no stronger position could be imagined than that the Mexicans held. The bridge over which it was necessary to pass was swept by batteries. Before the causeway a big canal stretched, and guarding the entrance to the crossing was a field-battery that was advanced in the open some 300 yards. A stone wall, pierced by a double row of embrasures, was on one side of the road, and a heavily fortified church overlooked both. The road along which the American columns had to pass was enfiladed, and swept from three dififerent directions. There was another road, however, leading from a place called Coyhoacan on the farther side of this fortified position. Thus the American army in its attack was divided into two separate divisions, fighting two separate battles within a mile of one another. General Worth was to force the main causeway, while Twiggs and Pillow with Shields's brigade that had been in the action of the morning, were to push forward along this second road and thus divert the Mexican forces, and keep them in fear of being cut off from the city, should they find it necessary to retreat.



Map of Battle of Churubusco
(Justin H. Smith, *The War with Mexico*, New York: The MacMillian Company, 1919, 111.)

The well-laid plans of General Scott were carried out to the letter. He had led the army so often to victory that it did not doubt for a minute that it would succeed if ever it got started. The men well trusted the commander who had so far made no mistake; they

reasoned that as long as he had prepared the way for them with his mind they had but to follow it with their bodies.

At one o'clock each separate command had reached its allotted position. Scott saw them moving down the roads as if for review, and no sooner had they come within range than the Mexican batteries opened. As Worth and Colonel Garland pressed up the road the heads of their columns were swept by the fire. But nothing could check the troops, whose only idea was forward. The lines of the two separate conflicts had now approached so that they were but a few hundred yards apart, and the stone-walled farmhouse or hacienda and the church were now between the American lines. The field-batteries had been directed against the two foremost entrenched positions the Mexicans held, and they were soon reduced and taken at the point of the bayonet. From the walls and roofs of the city crowds of men and women watched the fight; of one thing all were certain, that none of the invaders would ever cross the bridge; that there the advance would be stopped! By half-past two the head of Clark's brigade had reached the entrance to the bridge. They had had to step over the bodies of their fallen comrades to do so, but when the order to charge was passed not a man faltered. They crowded across the muddy ditch and rushed the bridge furiously. The Mexicans did not stay to meet them. Over the parapets they went, men jumping sometimes ten or twelve feet to reach the ground beyond.

General Twiggs, who had fought a separate action, had suffered severely. The open position that he had held for two hours had diverted a great deal of the fire that might have overwhelmed Worth's impetuous advance. In order to try to save the day, Santa Anna threw up his reserve force, and suddenly poured 4,000 infantry and 3,000 cavalry on the brigades of Pierce and Shields. The Americans had no defenses, there were no entrenched and loop-holed walls before them. They stood shoulder to shoulder on the top of a slight eminence and watched the masses of the Mexicans come on. Straight and true they aimed and shot and emptied the saddles, and even stepped out to meet the crest of the brilliant - uniformed line that was rolling down upon them. These men were New York and South Carolina volunteers for the most part, but they fought like veterans. They would not be ridden

under; they refused to be mowed down, and once they had actually charged through the hostile ranks and taken an advanced position, moving their hollow square, entirely surrounded, nearer the city than before. Scott now sent forward the regiments of Ransom, Wood, and Morgan to Shields's relief. They fought their way through to their side, and then the next minute the fight ceased. But not a foot backward had a single detachment of Americans stepped. The dragoons pursued the flying forces of Santa Anna to the very gates of the city. It was a remarkable ending of a most remarkable day. The gloom, discontent, and uncertainty of the night before had been changed to rejoicing and victory. The goal was in sight, they were actually under the walls of the capital. The divisions had been so far separated that there had actually been four separate victories won. Once more Scott rejoiced, but still his position was one that might cause even the stoutest heart to feel a touch of fear. Heavy batteries and almost impregnable defenses had been carried within twelve hours. But a few more such days and there would be no army left! Over 1,000 men had fallen on the American side, nearly 80 officers among them; and, although his supplies had been much augmented by his successive captures, he was 300 miles from his base, and a single defeat would mean that few of the men under him would ever see the shores of their native land again.

Scott's report was terse and to the point. After describing shortly the different actions and mentioning many of the brave young men by name who had contributed to the glories of the victory, he writes as follows:

"So terminated the series of events which I have but feebly presented. My thanks were freely poured out on the different fields, to the abilities and science of generals and other officers-—to the gallantry and prowess of all, the rank and file included. But a reward infinitely higher—the applause of a grateful Government—will, I can not doubt, be accorded in due time to so much of merit of every sort displayed by this glorious army, which has now overcome all difficulties — distance, climate, ground, fortifications, numbers.

"It has in a single day, in many battles, as often defeated 32,000 men, made about 3,000 prisoners, including 8 generals (2 of them

ex-Presidents) and 205 other officers; killed or wounded 4,000 of all ranks, besides entire corps dispersed and dissolved; captured 37 pieces of ordnance—more than trebling our siege-train and field-batteries—with a large number of small arms, a full supply of ammunition of every kind, etc. These great results have overwhelmed the enemy.

"Our loss amounts to 1,053 killed, 139, including 16 officers; wounded, 876, with 60 officers."

CHAPTER XIII

SUCCESS AND PEACE

The commissioner, Mr. Trist, that our vacillating Government had sent down to misrepresent it, hummed and hawed and held long confabulations with the Mexican commissioners over what they were pleased to term "peace negotiations," but they amounted to nothing. Scott with his little army waited patiently, and knew that he would soon be called upon to fight again. While Mr. Trist and his colleagues were dragging out and postponing affairs, the American general thought and planned. And the Mexicans were not idle. Although they were attempting to strengthen the already strong positions that surrounded the city, they were doing more than that, in that they were building up the morale of their thrice-defeated army. Exhortations, promises of reward and punishment, were used to remind the Mexican troops that nothing but their strong stand could save the city. They were told that the bright eyes of the women would look down upon their valorous deeds; that all history that told of brave defenses would have to he rewritten, and they would rewrite it for the honor and glory of Mexico.

Scott, knowing that the peace negotiations were about to fail, and that victory or ruin awaited him, had made a close study of the defenses; surely they were strong enough. There were but eight main traveled ways which entered the city proper. The five gates that were the only means by which the citizens themselves could enter or leave, were each and were each and everyone protected by a strong and separate fort. An impenetrable swamp was on one side of the town, while on the other side stretched a wide and deep canal, over which the roads passed on bridges commanded by the Mexican guns. Last, and by no means least, was the towering fortress of Chapultepec, whose frowning ramparts and myriad loopholes commanded not only the main approaches, but the great city itself that lay almost at its foot. It is an old maxim of war that no city can be invested and held until the citadel has fallen, and here towered the strongest fortified position on the whole of the western continent! Not only were the steep sides of the hill dotted here and there with batteries and redoubts, the base itself being

surrounded by a high stone wall, but at the very top, 150 feet in almost sheer ascent, rose the castle, surmounted by a great dome and bristling with the guns thag lined its escarpments, bastions, and parapets. Two stone walls, 15 feet high, of solid masonry, ran about the base of the castle, and here heavy cannon were placed. Only on one side could the heights be scaled, and that was on the western side, between the city and the fortress.

The qestion was, how to get there. A heavy forest was on this western slope, and on its edge were two fortified positions, the King's Mill (Molino del Rey) and the Casa de Mata, two strongly built stone edifices well adapted for defense, that stood on a line about 400 feet apart. Between them Santa Anna had built a heavy battery, in which he had placed a line of 24-pounders. In and about this almost impregnable position were 14,000 men, and counting the forces on the slopes above and in the citadel itself, Santa Anna had at his beck and call at least 30,000. In this army were not enumerated the volunteers and guerrilla forces from the city and surrounding country.

Again think of it! Scott had little more than 8,000 available men, including all branches of the service!

Mr. Trist's futile attempts at peace negotiations failed utterly on the 7th of September, and on the evening of the 7th Scott resolved to move upon the city and to arrive there, if possible, by way of Chapultepec.

It seems, in writing of the previous actions, tliat nothing more could be said to prove the remarkable persistence and valor of this little army. Yet what had gone before, wonderful as it had been, was nothing to what happened in the next forty-eight hours. How human flesh and blood could have stood the strain is hard to comprehend, and how the endurance of these remarkable soldiers held out is little short of marvelous; but at the end of the day Molino del Rey was in their possession, although it had cost, in killed and wounded, fully i,ooo men. Wonderful things had taken place. The storming party that had first, under Major Wright, fiercely attacked the center battery, reached the wall, and actually fought and clubbed the Mexican gunners from their guns, but when it was seen what a small detachment had accomplished this, the

Mexicans rallied and drove them out by sheer force of numbers. Wright had, when he started on this wild dash in open daylight, 500 men, commanded by 14 officers; 11 out 2 of the 14 were shot down, and but 160 of the command were able to reform at the edge of the wood. But these same heroes, when joined by a light battalion under Kirby Smith and some of Cadwallader's volunteers, swept forward again and overran the battery, breaking the Mexican line in two.

But the enemy that held possession of the two strong stone buildings could not he driven out without the assistance of artillery. Slowly, but surely, the American field-pieces were advanced by hand across the open space, tiring as they went. Before they had got within 400 yards every gunner was shot away, and Captain Drum called upon the infantry for volunteers, but there were no men who knew very much about artillery, and none of them liked to give up their places in their own regiments; yet the guns must be served and must be pushed nearer; soon, strange to relate, they were in action again. Foot by foot they were trundled ahead of the infantry, who were waiting for a breach to be made, through which they might enter with the bayonet. When Drum looked at those guns he saw that every artillerist beside them was a West Point officer! They had left their commands, and, with sponge and rammer, primer, ball, and charge, were working as coolly as if they were at practise at the green plateau that overlooks the Hudson. Behind the battery and almost surrounding it, the infantry crowded. The first breach being made, shrieking and cheering, they charged forward, almost clawing at one another in their anxiety to be first inside the defenses. Frightful was the carnage there; no quarter was asked or given on either side, and the little stream that ran from the fountain, that had been shattered by a cannon-shot, was red with blood.

Around the other stone house almost the same story was repeated, although here the American loss was even greater. For two hours the infantry had sustained the concentrated fire of grape and musketry without retiring, and it was not until late in the afternoon, when the sun was setting, that they got near enough to charge over guns, gunners, and all. Out of one regiment that faced the Mexican fire here but 300 men remained.

Scott rode over the field that night, and his heart bled at the evidences of the terrific slaughter, "friend and foe in one red burial blent." But yet the slightly wounded, or those who were yet conscious, raised themselves on their elbows and feebly cheered him.

There was no sleep that night for the general or his staff. They had taken the first step to Chapultepec. They were on the lower stair, but they would have to fight their way to the very top, and if this day's battle was an earnest of the one that was to follow, there would be between 5,000 and 6,000 men, only, left him to enter a city that had comprised among its population nearly 80,000 men of fighting age. Whether the city would resist his entering—if Chapultepec should fall—he could not tell. He was led to suppose it would not. At all events, there was no time to hesitate. Action was necessary. Scott said to one of his officers: "If I had ten times the number of men that I now have, I could use them; so every man must fight as if he was ten himself." And that is exactly what they did. By all rules of the game of war that were ever printed, written, or learned, Scott was defeated and repulsed. In fact, he should have been annihilated, if not at Molino del Rey, the first thing on the following morning after this costly victory. The Mexicans might have poured out like an avalanche from the cliffs above and swept the little blue-coated army out of existence. But such a thought never entered the American private's mind. The general had carried him through tight places before, and he would do it again. There was nothing to prevent him entering the city proper at this very minute. All he had to do was to batter down one of the gates and rush through into the streets that were filled with the terror-stricken inhabitants, but with Chapultepec in the Mexicans' hands, his sojourn in Mexico would have been short; he might have entered, but he would never have left again. It was necessary to pause before delivering the final attack.

Scott determined to divert attention by pretending that the city was his destination. So on the 12th of September a battery, well supported, was sent forward to begin hammering at the gate. Four large batteries were planted within easy distance of the castle walls, with orders to begin firing as soon as daylight was sufficient for the ranges to be found. Long before the sun had shown above the

horizon, the grim, gray dawn was saluted by the red gashes of flame from the cannons' mouths. The shells raising their fiery arches from their burning fuses, the thundering discharges of the Mexican guns that soon replied, almost shook the solid rock. From daylight till it was pitch dark the artillery duel went on. The Mexicans, though firing from above, displayed, luckily, little accuracy, and the American gunners soon got the range to a dot, and hardly a shot went wild. By nightfall it was evident the fortress was severely shaken; and by the morning of the 13th the storming party were in position. The plan was to advance in two columns.

Pillow was to come forward from the west, and Quitman on the southeast. Ahead of the main columns, on each side, were 250 picked men. Worth's division was to act as a reserve, and Twiggs was to keep up his attack on the gates of the city.

The Mexicans had mined the first line of defenses, and it was the intention to blow up the Americans if they should ever cross the ramparts; but so keen were the troops and so swift was the first advance that the picked vanguard reached the first wall and surmounted it alone. They shot down the men who had been left to fire the mines, and were stamping out some of the burning fire trains that led to them, as the main division, shouting and cheering, came tumbling over the escarpment.

The firing now broke out all along the surface of the hill. Here and there little bands of five or six men could be seen, climbing along like goats, helping with hand and shoulder their comrades above and beneath them. Resistlessly they pushed up. The Mexicans watching from the cathedral spires and the city walls saw the Stars and Stripes, flag after flag appear, as point after point was taken. But for some time from the topmost pinnacle floated the Mexican banner, and then at last it wavered, fluttered, and came down.

A detachment of the New York volunteers, led by Lieutenant Reid, and another of the Second Infantry, led by the brave Lieutenant Steele, were first to gain the inner walls of the citadel. Young Steele was badly wounded, but with the assistance of two men on either side of him, he kept moving upward, and when at last he reached the top, it was his own hand that lowered the last Mexican banner. As its folds fluttered about him, he fell fainting to the ground.

Scott, with great difficulty, owing to his tremendous size and weight, at last reached the crest, and saw the retreating Mexicans streaming away on all sides, and hanging on their flanks, pursuing them, were bodies of American troops, mad with the desire to kill and to have revenge for the slaughter of their comrades at Molino del Rey. Scott sent orders, ordering the recall of the pursuers. To those near about him he raised his voice almost in supplication. "Be humane and generous, my boys, as you are victorious, and I will get down on my bended knee to God for you to-night."

It was a long time, however, before the officers could call off their men from the pursuit. The hillsides and the plain and the meadow beyond were crowded with dead and wounded Mexicans.

In the afternoon a small battery was carried before the gates, and at four o'clock on the next morning, September 14th, a deputation from the City Council waited upon General Scott and informed him that the Government and all the troops had fled from the capital, and that the citizens themselves wished to surrender the city.

Scott refused to sign any capitulation, claiming that the city was already in his possession, and about daylight Worth and Quitman advanced, and, practically, unmolested, reached the great plaza and hoisted the colors of the United States on the national palace. There was some rioting that lasted twenty-four hours, for many soldiers had thrown aside their uniforms, and joining the liberated convicts, carried on desultory firing from the housetops. But with the assistance of the municipal authorities, who apparently were glad to see the American army in possession, they were at last driven out and punished. Guards were posted everywhere, and within four days the city was tranquil and cheerful, and the American soldiers everywhere were winning their way, not now by force of arms, but by strict maintenance of law and order, and by the magnanimity of their conduct.

The losses on both sides, during the action on the 13th, and the storming of Chapultepec and the storming of the gates of the city, were as follows: The Mexicans lost in killed outright over 1,000, and in wounded 1,580, while 853 were taken prisoners, a loss equal to half the numbers of the attacking force. The American loss in killed and wounded was under 900.

It would be cheerful writing if we could record that General Scott was to reap at once the benefit of all that he had gained. But, alas, it was not so! No sooner had he established law and order in the captured capital than he received orders to turn over his command and return home. He was dragged from his victorious battle-fields to answer groundless charges before a court of inquiry. The Mexicans could not understand it; the army that loved him to a man was stunned and nonplussed. The city authorities begged him to remain. They wished to make their terms with him instead of any other representative of the United States. Some well-intentioned people even thought to bribe him by offering him the presidency of the country, with a salary almost ten times that the President of his own received. However, he met them all. He told them that the Americans were a law-abiding nation. That he as commanding general had received orders from one higher in authority, the head of the nation at Washington, and there was nothing for him to do but to obey the summons. Back along the line of his victorious march he traveled with a small retinue, and disdaining to accept the offer of transportation on a large and commodious steamer, on the ground that his soldiers would soon be needing her services, he set sail on a little brig for New York.

Sick at heart, he hastily passed through the city, without stopping to receive the congratulations of its inhabitants, and quietly he retired to his little home in Elizabethtown, N. J.; but the country would not let him rest, and soon he was called from his seclusion to receive one of the greatest outbursts of popular feeling and enthusiasm ever shown a leader in peace or war in the United States.

New York city turned out en masse to greet him. Public buildings were decorated with flags, and the voice of the metropolis joined with the music of the bands in hails to the chief.

We can not here discuss the outcome of the war with Mexico, its reason or its justice. We have but to do with the glorious character of the man. Faults he may have had; self-dependence may have been twisted by some minds so as to represent a sense of personal vanity; assurance in his own powers may have been mistaken by some for overweening pride. But let a contemporary speak of him as

those who knew him best believed him to be in his character and person, dauntless and brave, bold, determined, and honest:

"Courage and coolness in the hour of danger; fertility in resource; extensive, yet rapid, combinations of powers necessary to covering a great field of operation, yet losing none of the details; perfect control over his troops, tireless energy, and great humanity—combine in him as are rarely found in any man." [*Barnes is here quoting Joel Tyler Headley, a clergyman and writer of the 19th century. Headley notes of Scott, "Success cannot intoxicate him, nor defeat enervate him."--Ed.*]

In 1852 Scott was a candidate of the Whig party for President, and though defeated, he was nearly successful; but he had many enemies (as what great man has not?), and the victorious party, under President Pierce, in the very shame at the ingratitude of politicians, conferred on him the title of lieutenant-general, with a salary of $10,000 a year.

At the outbreak of the great civil war he was at the head of the army, an old man burdened with years and weighted down with responsibilities and physical ailments that went with his extreme age; still he boldly confronted the problem, and though forced to step aside at last, inaugurated the plans and movements, many of which led to the ultimate success of the National forces. And he lived to see peace once more settle down upon the country in whose cause he had bled, and to whose service he had given over fifty years of his eventful and successful life.

General Winfield Scott
(from J. T. Headley, *The Life of Winfield Scott*,
New York: Charles Schribner, 1861)

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